

Childhood Education

The Magazine for Teachers of Young Children

To Stimulate Thinking Rather Than Advocate Fixed Practice

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Next Year

■ How can we conserve our human resources? Next year's issues will attempt to answer this question. The Editorial Board suggests one of the ways and points the direction in the theme for 1943-44, "The Disciplines of World Citizenship."

The September issue will discuss discipline and what it means. The October issue will show how the discipline of developing perspective functions in an airmage, and the November issue will be devoted to the discipline of finding self. Some of the content will discuss sharing and giving as important disciplines for finding one's self.

The discipline of giving and receiving affection will be discussed in the December issue with children's needs for affection and the role of affection in preventing or creating delinquency receiving particular attention. The discipline of work, January 1944 issue; the discipline of group participation, February, and the discipline of making choices, the theme for the April issue, complete the discussions of the major theme.

Workshops on A.C.E. publications, to be held in connection with the six A.C.E. regional conferences this summer, will contribute much to next year's issues, and the Association's publication program. We anticipate stimulating and excellent content.

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The Pigeon-House.

"WHAT to the child gives inward joy,
He loves to represent in play.
The dove flies away from his little home;
The child through the green fields loves to roam.
The little dove comes back at night;
The child, too, keeps his dear home in sight.
Then all the life and all the play
That filled the long and happy day,—
All he has found, all he has seen,
He loves at home to rehearse again;
And all these joys, together bound,
Now in a varied wreath are wound."

Song.

OPEN now my pigeon-house :
Out fly all the pigeons once more let loose.
Away to the broad green fields they fly ;
They pass the day right merrily,
And when they come back to rest at night,
Again I close my pigeon-house tight.

"Come, Let Us Live With Our Children"

A CENTENNIAL AND ITS CHALLENGE

This is the centennial year of the publication of "The Mottoes and Commentaries of Friedrich Froebel's Mother Play." What does this old book have to offer today's teachers of young children? Miss Shute thinks it has much to offer and suggests that a fresh reading might give all of us new perspective and challenge. Miss Shute was a student of Susan E. Blow and Laura Taussig Fisher, a kindergarten training teacher at the Boston Normal School and Teachers College of Boston for forty years, and a lecturer at the Nursery Training Center of Boston for twenty years. She retired in 1937.

"IT GIVES ME A BETTER perspective," wrote a young student, "to know that these things were thought of so long ago and what is more, it offers a challenge not to let them continue to be imperfectly realized in the education of our little children." This statement is typical of many made by college students in recent years when, after a thorough grounding in the best progressive literature of the day, they were asked to read Froebel's Mother Play¹ and to draw their own conclusions.

While recognizing, as any modern reader must, the limitations of the crudely drawn black and white pictures and the stilted phrasing of the texts, the students were amazed at the book's modern ideas of

childhood education, a bit chagrined to find that the educational importance of the earliest years was not quite the new discovery they had thought it, and distinctly stirred by its challenge to the realization of ideals. Might it not be possible that their elders, many of whom found inspiration in this book in earlier years, would find that a fresh reading would give them a similar perspective and challenge? This centennial year of its publication is certainly a fitting time for reconsidering what it offers the teachers of little children.

The crudities in the illustrations are easily explained when we realize that it was a pioneer book. Only Comenius' *Orbis Pictus* and a few simple picture books preceded it. Its true significance, however, can hardly be felt without some idea of its spiritual genesis in the life of the author, nor without it can we justify the conviction that its educational principles are still valid today. Mother Play was the flowering of Froebel's mature educational thought, based on long years of teaching adolescent boys in his famous Keilhau School.² It was during this time that Froebel's conviction grew that the many defects and limitations which prevented the boys' best development could be met only by training mothers to lay better foundations in the early years of childhood.

There is something very appealing in the story of this man, childless and elderly,

¹ *The Mottoes and Commentaries of the Mother Play*
by Friedrich Froebel, 1843.

² See *The Education of Man*. By Friedrich Froebel.

forsaking his earlier work and voluntarily living in daily intimate contact with the youngest children, eagerly watching their mothers' instinctive care of them that he might find the root needs of education. He noted the maternal tendency to play with the baby—naming and counting fingers and toes, playing pat-a-cake, guiding the fluttering arms and legs into more purposeful movement. He felt anew the educational possibilities in play which long years before he had characterized as "the highest phase of child development" containing "the germinal leaves of all later life."

From his observations he wrote two or three simple plays and sent them to the mother of a sick child. The response was so enthusiastic that he continued his writing. Gradually some fifty plays were produced, furnished with pictures and music by two of the graduates of the old Keilhau School and made unique by the addition of the so-called mottoes and commentaries in which he sought to interpret to the mothers their half-conscious procedure that it might be carried on "with conscious intent." Passionately convinced that the earliest years are the most important because of their priority and plasticity, Froebel sought to show the mother how to use the child's activities, especially his native tendency to imitate all he sees and hears, as the basic material of his education. He believed that what the child reproduces in dramatic form he tends to become, and that to influence his choice of models is to influence, for good or ill, the building of his whole personality. Countless instances of his presentation of principle and practical illustration could be quoted from the book, but so brief a paper can deal with only three: experience, selected experience, and re-lived experience. These three are chosen because they so clearly reveal his conscious method in contrast to the too-frequent tendency to make use of what is momentarily uppermost.

Experience

Underlying all else is Froebel's insistence that education must be based on individual experience—vital and glowing—involving the child's whole active self, and that listening to and repeating words, the accepted method of his day, had little or nothing to do with education. The book presents a series of pictures and dramatizations of children's simple, everyday experiences, the majority of which are still desirable for children today. While details may differ the meaning involved is basically the same and these experiences fall naturally into those with nature and with people. Experiences with nature involve such activities as feeding the birds, watering the flowers, wondering at the moon and stars, playing with wind and light, seeing the processes which link together the field of grain and the loaf of bread, sharing in the endless beauty of form and color and sound, and learning to know the names of these objects and activities. Experiences with people involve seeing the mother bathing, dressing and feeding the baby, picking flowers for the father's birthday, watching the farmer and carpenter; sharing in family life; playing and working with other children; observing older folk on their way to church.

Tied in inextricably with these two groups of experience there is always a third type—the spiritual. To the devout writer of this little book the whole world was aflame with God, and each simple experience had its spiritual possibilities. The long chain of dependence of baker on miller on farmer, and farmer on the sun and rain led back naturally in Froebel's thought to God who gives not only sun and rain but the infinite mystery of life. The nurture of the birds by their father and mother suggested the parents' care of the child and the Heavenly Father's fostering love of all He has created. The happiness

of family life, where each plays his part and learns to sacrifice his own pleasure for the good of the whole, made more obvious the fundamental brotherhood of man. The natural questioning about the church gave an opportunity to foster delight in the beauty and solemn hush of the building itself which should later lead to a dawning sense of that marvellous "communion of souls" with each other and with their common Father which is the goal of spiritual nurture.

Froebel's stress on the spiritual significance of everyday experience is, perhaps, the least understood of his contributions to education. Too often it has been taken to suggest that we are to explain such meanings to the child and many are the errors to which this misunderstanding has led. All that Froebel intended was that the experiences should be given repeatedly and intelligently as a foundation for later understanding, a point of view it would be well to revive in this materialistic day.

Selected Experience

Not all experiences are of value and one of Froebel's chief aims was to show the mother which experiences to select for emphasis and which to touch lightly or discard as trivial or even harmful. Even a cursory examination of the experiences listed above shows clearly his desire to stress, in relation to nature, the recognition of dependence on its great forces and products; the responsibility for nurturing life weaker than our own; the enjoyment of the great beauty and marvel of God's world. Experiences in relation to human life show our dependence on the work of others; our duty to carry our share of the common load; the need of such indispensable characteristics as punctuality, orderliness, honesty, fair play, and whole-hearted cooperation. And lastly, experiences in the spiritual world develop an

awareness of that unseen life which gives form and order to all external living; the almost breathless joy that comes in the face of wide-spread sea, towering mountains, or starlit night, each one declaring the glory of God; a recognition of our common dependence in a changing and tumultuous world upon One with whom "there is no variableness neither shadow of turning."

Re-lived Experience

To give experience, even carefully selected experience, is not enough. In fact we fail to catch the main significance of Froebel's method if we omit this third point of re-lived experience. What does he mean by it? Chiefly that no life is truly lived if it is just a series of events, one slipping into oblivion as the next one comes along with no sense of their inevitable relationship.

If more individuals were trained from babyhood to see the relation of their own past deeds to their present conditions we should have far fewer mental and emotional breakdowns now. If groups and nations would study their own history and seek out their own responsibility for strained and breaking relations, there would be hope of recourse to arbitration and adjustment rather than to the terrible and too often futile weapon of war. There must be pauses in life for retrospect and meditation if we are to live sanely. And so we find the Mother Play giving practical illustrations of the small beginnings which may help the little child to "see life steadily and see it whole"—in hiding games where the joyous return to the mother after a brief separation emphasizes their essential unity; in the "Pigeon House" whose commentary conversation in spite of its stilted form is still a model for helping the child grasp the essentials of a recent experience; and in the "All Gone" in which the loss

(Continued on page 432)

New Values Need

New Measures

Parents and educators are looking at children today from a different perspective which points to the importance of considering the total life pattern of the child if we would evaluate his real progress. Miss Veverka was formerly director of curriculum in the Los Angeles public schools.

THE CHANGES EDUCATION has brought about are in realms which do not lend themselves to weighing and measuring as do coal and pork. Too often we who are educators must feel our way in knowing what to do and when to do with the children. There are no tools by which their minds can be opened to see how they work. We discover it somehow by an uncanny intuition at our finger tips—if we are good teachers.

Education offers no more dramatic evidence of this power than the story of the kindergarten and its founding. An elderly man without help from child psychology since there was none, with meager knowledge of biology, with the physical processes of the human organism merely foreshadowed not understood, with thinking crusted over with symbolism, with no research or experimental data to guide him, not even a child of his own to observe, produced an educational system so fraught with truth and understanding that we have improved it but little but we have borrowed from it enough of process and meaning to change and stir education for all time to come. The nearer our schools, at any

level, come to interpreting Froebel's idea, "come let us live with our children," the nearer we shall come to realizing real education for the children.

Within our schools we have learned to sample and measure native endowment. We have released children from the scourge of having to learn that for which they have no interest or need. We have taught the world and even efficient industry the magic and reviving power of play. We have showed that learning goes on continuously from birth to death; that adults learn what they need to know at sixty as easily as children of six learn what they need to know. We have learned to measure the amount of learning in a field in a given time. This and much more have come to a rapidly changing world from the school.

These changes, however, are but steps to even greater services from the schools. We have probed into causes of behavior, conduct and delinquency. We have learned of the sacredness of personality. We have found many causes as to why children fail in school and why men fail in life. We have learned of complexes of growth and maturity. We have evolved schools of psychology, not as rules by which to fashion human beings, but as answers to questions about the behavior of children. The world of tomorrow is absolutely dependent for its direction and progress upon the human stuff we send out of our schools to run it. And the quality of the living in our schools today will determine the quality of living in the world of tomorrow. Education, then,

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is the process of helping children to experience the good life and to equip them to obtain a progressively improving one for themselves and others.

The realization of this kind of education is more nearly possible in our present activity schools than ever before. Although it is not the final stage, the last step, nor perhaps the best, the activity school provides the freedom necessary for better insight which will result in better interpretation of what should be happening to children and what children should cause to happen to people and things about them. For this kind of school life the old measures are good in so far as they go. But children are coming to occupy an ever larger world themselves. They are active in many new situations. They are doing more in school than just learning. They are *becoming* and this is significant.

To learn certain combinations in arithmetic, important as that is, is not all or enough to know about those combinations. How to use them and when is a further knowledge, and beyond this is the creation of a situation for the use of that knowledge. There was a time when just knowing how to read, write, spell or figure was sufficient apart from the application to life situations. Today, in this changing world, we are suffering not because we cannot read but because the reading we do is not enhancing our understanding nor building imagination and sympathy. When the war came, was it precipitated because men could not read or figure? Was it due to ignorance of the tools? Indeed, some of the countries involved have a higher literacy record than the United States. No. We can read, but we cannot read between the lines. The teaching of reading or any tool skill is now responsible for what is between the lines. We must find new measures for the values and meanings that lie "between the lines."

The Total Life Pattern

Education is venturing into a new realm—the total life pattern of the individual. A child is physical; he has limitations; he has powers; he has handicaps. His home must be considered; his popularity with his peers; the teacher—her blue eyes and gray hair; the desk at which he sits, be it too high or too low or just right; the color of his book; the roar of a distant train; his empty stomach; his sore toe—all are a part of him. When one aspect is affected the total is affected. A bottle of milk might produce a change.

The school aims to affect this total picture and to do it with definite purpose. It has to, if it is to educate, and it must not be too quick to "test." We have been so ambitious to test our products before we knew what the products were to be. Let us not be too hasty now to clamp tests on the child lest we get a game or a trick which does not give us what we want. Perhaps it is this very thing that has given the kindergarten its strength—no one ventured to pull it apart by any form of measure. Things happening there were so subtle, so involved, that few ventured to measure them.

Since the total child is the consideration, education must consider his total day. Our programs at present provide for about one-fifth of the child's day while living goes on five-fifths of the day.

To cover the twenty-four hours we must have classes for parents—mothers' classes, PTA, lectures, books, and no end of literature about children. To guide the total child in his total day we must have a home-school curriculum. Parents should cooperate and serve on committees with teachers to plan it. Until this is done, one part of the child only will receive expert treatment while many important aspects will be neglected entirely or grow up as contradictions of what the school is trying to do. This new

curriculum will be tried out, criticized, revised, enriched as time goes on. Then may we devise measures of what total education is doing for the child and whether the processes, not the products, of growth are right. For education is a process, a way of life, just as democracy is.

There are now many schools where this kind of total education is visioned or even in process. Some administrators are working sincerely to make conditions for it. But we note that where education is so interpreted, only a minor place is given to testing it.

We are learning much about children through a study of their informal expressions. Children in an English class were asked to write upon the subject, "The Kind of Home I Shall Have When I Grow Up." The compositions were illuminating to the psychologist and teacher. The child's attitude toward his parents, where he felt the need for security, his secret longings, and his budding plans for life were revealed. These are some of the statements:

I will be kind to my children when I have a home, and never slap them.

I will have only three children.

I will go places with my children when they want me to.

I will always dress neat and in nice colors.

I will learn a trade first so I can earn the money.

I will have a garden. My house will be painted white.

I will make my children mind, but I'll be kind.

Could we not find in these expressions splendid material for a home-school curriculum which some of us vision? *Are we lifting too quickly the disciplines of a former education before we have replaced them with others?* Perhaps cooperating

with the home in such an enterprise would throw light upon obedience; staying out late; teasing little ones; need of time for play, reading, social contacts.

From Competition to Cooperation

The new world we vision is to be more of a cooperative than a competitive one. So we must remove competition from our programs. In one school, lessons are assigned to a group. The group organizes itself for study, assigns portions to each member, passes on the product and recites as a group. Surely we must accept the thesis that since we are concerned with the total personality in any act only tests which measure the total personality in action will be of much value. This task is yet before us.

Parents are looking at children with new eyes. So are administrators. We must move not one aspect of our school machinery but the whole of it because it, too, is a total big aspect of education. Affecting one angle affects the whole. We are committed to a no-failure program, but that means a new grouping on another basis than grades. There, too, we wonder what the outcome will be and we have gone to the children to get their evaluation.

Let us gather many evidences of what present-day education seems to be doing to children, to teachers, to the plant generally. Let us interpret these and see if there is some common thread running through the whole. Let us experiment more in various situations. As we grow in understanding we will not make superficial tests and measures of these new realms of living. We will not need to apologize for them nor throw them into the discard too soon. *In the meantime*, let us use our fine experience; let us see if children are adequate as apprentices to life. Let us guide them by entering understandingly into their lives and really living with them.

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Group experience is not the same for these boys. One is left out and removes himself further from their play by the "revenge" he is planning.

By KATHERINE H. READ

Evaluating Children's Group Experiences

A "behavior inventory" was used to estimate the group experiences of thirty-one children in a nursery school. The method employed, the results of the study and an interpretation of them in terms of changing behavior and the children's group positions are reported by Mrs. Read who is director of the nursery school at Oregon State College, Corvallis.

IN THE PROCESS of growing up, a child becomes a member of many groups.

The place that he holds in each of them has a significant influence on his developing personality.

A child's earliest experiences are with the family group. From his home he progresses into neighborhood groups and later into a school group. He finds himself in various relations within each group. He may be the youngest, the oldest, the fastest, the slowest, or he may be like most of the others.

To each different position he responds in a different way. His response, in turn, in-

fluences the way the group reacts to him. One child may enter a group and find children like himself who accept him and respond with at least a measure of understanding. He may go forward eagerly to share new experiences with them. He becomes a popular group-member and things are easy for him. Another child who is slow and clumsy may enter the same group. He may always be left behind. When the others are climbing to the top of the jungle gym, he is afraid. He withdraws rather than share the group experiences. Because of the differences in their behavior, membership in the same group holds different values for each of these children.

Estimation by a "Behavior Inventory"

It becomes important to estimate the child's behavior-position in a particular group if we are to understand the meaning of the experience for him and to guide him effectively in that group.

By using a behavior rating device we can obtain a measure of *how much* a child differs from the group average in behavior, a measure of the *direction* of his behavior deviations (whether they are favorable or unfavorable), and a measure of the *variability* in direction of these differences. In other words, we may estimate whether a child differs greatly from his group or is similar to his group generally in the behavior he exhibits. We may estimate whether his behavior differences are largely favorable or unfavorable. We may estimate whether he shows both types of differences or whether his deviations from the group are largely in one direction. These measures give us an indication of the child's behavior in relation to others in the group. They are a measure of his behavior-position in the group.

These three measures—the extent, the direction, and the variability in direction of individual behavior difference from the

group—were obtained for thirty-one nursery school children. The results indicated striking individual differences in the children's behavior-positions in their group. The method employed to obtain the results for these thirty-one children is described in the following paragraphs:

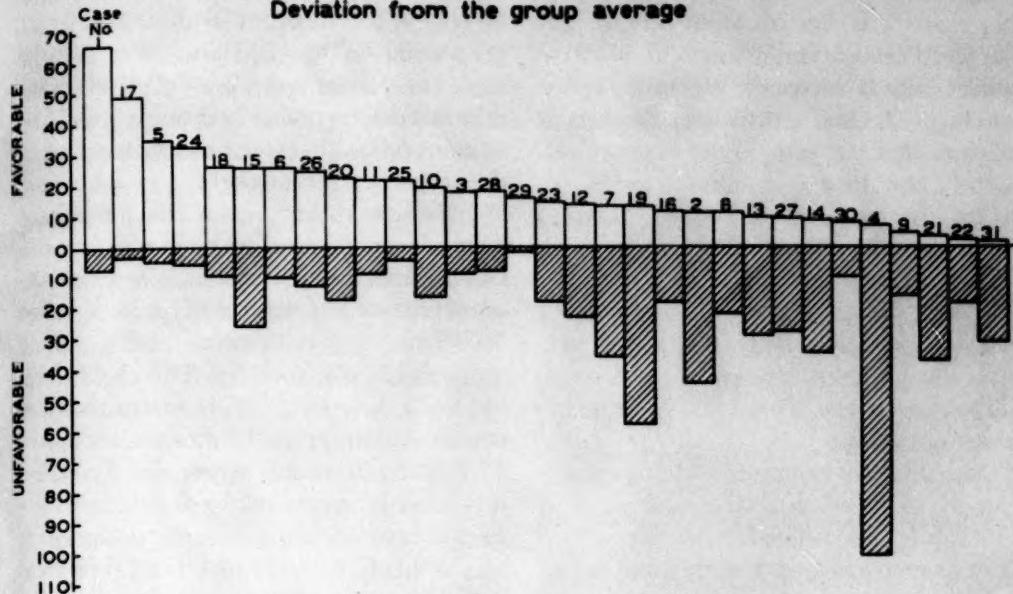
Each of the children was rated by from four to seven judges on the sixty-seven behavior traits constituting the Read-Conrad Behavior Inventory. The judges were nursery school teachers who had known the children for several months. In the Read-Conrad Inventory the items of behavior or traits are rated on a seven point scale from most to least. The *child's score* on a trait was the average of the judge's ratings for him on that trait. The average of all the children's scores on a trait was the *group score* for a trait. The child's score was compared with the score of his group to see how much it differed and in what direction. The difference might be in the direction of more, or less, favorable behavior than that of the average of the group.

For example, on the trait "friendliness to others" the group score in one of the three groups was at level four of the seven point scale; while the score of one child was at level two. This child, thus, differed from the group average by two points. The difference was in a favorable direction as it was toward the "most friendly" end of the rating scale.

When individual scores on traits were compared with group scores, the comparison gave two measures of group position for each child. These measures were (1) the total amount of the child's *favorable* deviation from the group, and (2) the total amount of the child's *unfavorable* deviation. For example, in one case (child number 17, see graph), the total of the child's favorable behavior deviations from the group average on traits was 47.9 points. His behavior differences in an unfavorable direction from the group totaled only 2.7 points. In another case (child number 31), the child's favorable differences from the group average amounted to only 1.9 points and his unfavorable differences from the group totaled 32 points.

The children's scores for favorable and unfavorable behavior deviations from the group average are shown in the following graph:

Scores of 31 Nursery School Children Arranged in order of Favorable Behavior
Deviation from the group average



Results and Interpretation

What did these measures of behavior difference from the group average reveal about the children?

In the first place, there were large differences in the *total amount* by which children deviated from the group average in behavior. Total deviation scores, or the sum of favorable and unfavorable deviations, ranged from 16.5 to 109.2 with a middle score around 35. The child with the score of 16.5, the lowest total difference score, was in the comfortable position of being like most of the other children on almost all the traits. He was outstandingly "average," a happy, well-liked child, interested in people and in activities, without any marked abilities or disabilities. His position in the group contrasted markedly with that of the child at the other extreme whose total difference score was 109.2. This child's peculiar expression, defensive and defiant, marked him as different from the

group at first sight. He was hostile, aggressive, and the other children avoided him. One of the quickest, most active children in the group, he was also one of the most fearful. Group experience for him must have consisted largely in feeling uncomfortably apart from the others.

This second child illustrates a trend which appeared in children with large behavior differences. More of their differences tended to be unfavorable rather than favorable. For example, the child with a total difference of 109.2 had an unfavorable score of 102 and a favorable score of only 7.2. The child with the next largest difference in behavior had a total deviation score of 71.6. His unfavorable difference score was 58.3 and his favorable difference score was 13.3. Being very different from the group seemed to be associated with a less favorable behavior position.

This is further borne out by the fact that the children who deviated most from the

group were not rated as high on the trait "happiness" as the children nearer the average. Perhaps being different leads to conflict which increases the unfavorable aspects of a child's behavior. Perhaps it indicates that teachers do not support sufficiently the favorable differences in behavior. In any event, being different seemed to place the children at a disadvantage in these groups.

Besides being different in *amount* of behavior deviation from the group average, the children studied showed large differences in the *direction* of their behavior deviations.

One child, for example, had a favorable score of 34.4 and an unfavorable score of 4.3. While he differed from the group about as much as most children, almost all his differences were in a favorable direction. He was friendly, independent, actively interested in all that went on around him, and always welcomed in a group. Another child had a favorable score of 1.9 and an unfavorable score of 32. With about the same amount of behavior difference from the group, he showed deviations in the opposite direction. He was insecure in his relationships. He constantly teased the children, played for the attention of the teachers, and showed few real interests in activities. The behavior differences of the first child almost all served to place him in a more comfortable position; the differences of the second child brought him into difficulties with the group. Group experience was not the same for these two children.

There were also large differences among the thirty-one children in the *variability* of the behavior deviations which they showed. Both favorable and unfavorable deviations appeared in the behavior of every child. None of the children were "all good" or "all bad." They varied in the extent to which they showed one type of deviation or the other. In some of the cases,

as in those cited, the differences were largely in one direction with only a small proportion in the opposite direction. In most cases there was a good deal of variation in both favorable and unfavorable directions but with a trend clearly marked in one direction or the other.

In a few striking cases the differences in behavior appeared to be almost equally balanced in both directions. For example, one child with a total difference score of 50.9 had a favorable score of 25 and an unfavorable score of 25.9. This child stood out for both types of differences to an equal extent. Another child with a total score of 17.2 had a favorable score of 8.2 and an unfavorable score of 9. While her behavior was not outstandingly different, it was as likely to differ in a favorable as in an unfavorable way. No trend in direction appeared established.

Such fluctuations in behavior deviation raise the question as to the possibility of change in the children's behavior patterns.

In the group of thirty-one nursery school children studied some of the most marked behavior changes during their period in nursery school were observed in the children with the most mixed patterns of response. The child with the favorable score of 25 and the unfavorable score of 25.9 grew more self-confident and more self-assertive in her second year in school. She showed a spontaneity and breadth of interest which surprised the staff. From an extremely shy child who retreated from every new situation, she developed into a socially able individual who not infrequently led the group into a new activity.

On the other hand, the child with a favorable score of 54 and an unfavorable score of 5 remained the same self-reliant, friendly, purposeful individual throughout two years of nursery school in spite of very disturbing changes in his home environment. The child with the favorable score

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of 7.2 and the unfavorable score of 102 did not change after two years' experience in nursery school where careful attention was paid to his problems.

It seems probable that the children with mixed behavior patterns (those who showed about the same amount of favorable and unfavorable deviations) did not have significantly unfavorable traits which swung the balance of responses to them in one direction. They did not appear to be suffering from serious conflicts which colored their whole behavior. They came from environments where favorable and unfavorable factors were probably mixed. Under guidance, in an environment in which desirable situations increased, these children responded with an increase in favorable behavior patterns.

The child, however, who deviated markedly and consistently in an unfavorable direction was perhaps reacting to deep-seated conflicts which were not affected by the educational program of a school. Such a child would seem to be in need of "clinical" study and radical changes in situation—an important need for the teacher to recognize.

It is also important for the teacher to recognize that the significance of any particular trait may depend upon the traits with which it is combined. "Aggressiveness" may be a more favorable trait in a child who has a high rating on sympathy than in a child who lacks sympathy. It may not be favorable when it appears in combination with destructiveness. "Onlooker" behavior may not be a significantly unfavorable trait

in a child who is friendly. It may be very unfavorable for the child who is not friendly. Scores need to be evaluated for individual children.

Summary

In summary, we might say that the personality-measures obtained indicated wide individual variation in behavior-position within the groups. Of the thirty-one nursery school children studied, some stood out for their differences in a favorable direction; some stood out for their differences in an unfavorable direction. In a few there appeared almost equal amounts of both types of behavior. More of the children showed a mixed pattern of behavior deviation from the group, with a trend in one direction or the other.

These differences of behavior in relation to the average behavior of the group on traits must result in each child finding the group a different situation. For some the group is a more favorable place than for others. Some need more help in making an adjustment than do others.

Understanding the extent of the child's behavior differences from his group, understanding the predominating direction of his behavior deviations and the variability of these deviations help the teacher to recognize the problems which group experience present to a child. It may help her evaluate more carefully the significance of certain of his traits. It is not enough to place a child in a group. It is necessary to understand what the group experience means to him and how he may profit from it.

Summer Schools

ANNOUNCEMENTS of summer sessions of interest to teachers of young children have been received from the following schools: Mills College, California; National College of Education, Evanston; Illinois; Sarah Lawrence College, Bronxville, New York; Teachers College, Columbia University, New York; University of Chicago; and University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia. Further information can be obtained from the colleges listed.

Some Recent Research in Child Development

Research in child development is changing. The study of children is no longer the special prerogative of pure scientists and statistical analysts, but rather the privilege of those who live with children most intimately day by day. From statistical entities children have become human beings about whom little is known but much can be learned. Mr. Witty, director of the Psycho-Educational Clinic at Northwestern University, is now serving in the army.

TECHNIQUES OF CHILD STUDY are increasingly numerous and varied. Controlled observation and experimentation have led to a more adequate understanding of the physical, mental, social and emotional growth of the young child, and photography has been used to record these developments. Promising results thus have been obtained and recorded from studies of different atmospheres for growth.

Reliable data on young children have been paralleled by very recent genetic studies which have followed the development of boys and girls through the elementary and secondary school and into adult life. Among the most significant of these longitudinal studies are those of Terman, and Dearborn and Rothney.¹

In addition, knowledge in child development has been deeply enriched by studies of children's interests, activities, and prob-

¹ Terman's studies of gifted children are appearing in current periodicals. The Harvard growth studies have been reported by Dearborn and Rothney and are discussed on pages 60 to 60.

lems. In this work, interest inventories, check lists, and interviews have been employed with outstanding success. Perhaps the most notable feature is the frequency with which classroom teachers have participated in it and described their own approaches to understanding the child. Thus, much of the work on children's development is finding immediate and practical application.

Among the carefully executed studies of young children are those of N. Bayley² and others³ on emotion and intelligence. Bayley's work demonstrates the falsity of the view that emotions are specifically patterned and limited to a few inborn patterns. Emphasis is placed by these investigators upon the significance of the early years, and the possibility of providing the foundation for sound mental and emotional health through preschool education and appropriate parent guidance.

Such recommendations are in striking contrast with those of J. B. Watson, who a decade or so ago advocated an objective, almost indifferent attitude toward the young child. The validity of Watson's approach is seriously questioned, for we now believe that Lawrence K. Frank's attitude expressed in a classic account, "The Fundamental Needs of the Child," is thoroughly justified. The child needs affectionate and sympathetic guidance at all stages of his development, and the home and the school

² *Mental Growth During the First Three Years.* By Nancy Bayley. Genetic Psychology Monographs (1933) Vol. 14, No. 1.

³ The work of A. Gesell, J. Anderson, and many others will be recalled.

should cooperate in this endeavor in order to guarantee the maximum results. When this cooperation is provided, often through the services of a nursery school, there are marked gains in the child's physical, social, and emotional well-being and growth.⁴

Investigators are demonstrating that continuous sturdy growth is based upon expression. D. Baruch and others urge the teacher to study children's needs for physical and emotional release and judiciously to guide and direct this expression in increasingly satisfactory channels.

Expression thus is essential during the preschool period when many types of growth proceed with extreme rapidity. But the child needs an opportunity for release and expression at all stages if sturdy growth is to be continuous. Hygienists have pointed out that expression, spontaneity and creativity appear to be the essential ingredients of mental health at every level of human growth.

In recent years many studies have been carried out in which check lists, questionnaires and interviews have been employed to ascertain children's characteristic behavior patterns at different ages. The first two techniques yield somewhat unreliable results; however, in many of the studies, the results secured through these instruments have been verified by interviews. Through all these approaches, a number of important considerations have emerged.

Emphasis on Children's Interests

Educators for decades have asserted that the curriculum should be developed in accord with children's problems, needs, and interests if it is to have real significance and immediate meaning and application. It appears to be the responsibility of the teacher to utilize interests as a starting point in the introduction of many activities, but teach-

ers must recognize that many interests are transitory or actually unworthy of extension, and hence need re-direction or replacement. Therefore, every teacher should aim to modify old patterns and create new interests. However inadequate interests may prove to be, they constitute the starting point for really effective reading programs. The interests of boys and girls on coming to school constitute the opportunity and responsibility of teachers; their interests on leaving a class or school reveal the contributions made to their growth.

Children frequently engage voluntarily and with enthusiasm in activities that have great educational potentialities. Thus, one boy may spend his allowance and earnings in creating a fine workshop; another may equip and operate a laboratory in which he "experiments" with electricity or chemicals; a third may turn his attention to an old machine or automobile and investigate all the related printed matter he can obtain. Other children display genuine interests in music, art, the radio, or follow various other interests which could be associated effectively with worthy activities in the school.

Undoubtedly, knowledge of these types of interests is indispensable to the teacher who seeks to insure the application and happy association of classroom skills with real life demands. It can readily be seen that many of these interests deserve encouragement and development.

Some teachers in an effort to ascertain interests have simply placed a long list of activities before children and have requested that favored activities be indicated. Such a method has been used profitably to indicate central tendencies for large groups. But investigations have sometimes revealed discrepancies between children's reports of their preferences and the actual demonstration of interests. In several investigations it has been revealed that children who

⁴ See "The Need for Nursery Education," By Beth L. Wellman. *Progressive Education*, March 1942, 19:147-149.

are permitted to follow their inclinations sometimes develop genuine interests in activities which they doubtless regarded as too immature or childish to record on a questionnaire. Others who do not indicate an interest in the arts or crafts occasionally develop skill and a genuine concern when encouraged to investigate these areas.

It seems, then, that teachers must be cautious in accepting the child's casual report as a reliable indicator of interests. Many teachers are now using a variety of methods to study children and are assembling various kinds of data in an effort to obtain evidence of children's genuine interests. Some are employing check lists and are supplementing the reports of children by observing their behavior; others are employing interest inventories, and still others are utilizing interview and observation techniques. Again and again teachers indicate that such approaches yield data of value not only in individual guidance but also in work with groups. Accordingly, after ascertaining the central or dominant interests of a class, many teachers encourage and make provision for worthy group interests. They point out that this procedure tends to deepen and enrich individual interests as well as to promote cooperative activities of lasting value.

Results of Interest Studies

Although studies show that the child on coming to school is to a certain degree socialized, there is evidence of solitary tendencies. Thus, six-year-old children take part in a number of activities in which very little organization or cooperation is necessary. However, it is a mistake to assume that the child is "ego-centric" at this time; he is undergoing the process of socialization, and alternates between social and individualistic behavior.

One investigator reported a provocative study of the favored indoor materials of

kindergarten, first grade, and second grade children. Boys showed a strong interest in activities in which building equipment was used. Modeling and painting followed, while activities involving drawing and cardboard construction were much less popular. Water color painting held first place among the interests of the girls, and sewing appeared next. The girls were much less attracted than the boys to blocks and building, although as they grew older their interest increased. So too did a display of interest in paper construction.

Another study showed somewhat similar results for a five-year-old group. The boys were reported to be much more active than the girls; for example, they showed great interest in wagons, trucks, and other vehicles. In several studies the differences between boys and girls were emphasized. However, in every study the differences were less conspicuous than the similarities in their favored activities.

In one study, children from seven to eleven were asked to name their play preferences. Games such as Tag, Pom Pom Pullaway, and others which insure motor coordination decreased in popularity. Similarly, make-believe games declined rapidly after seven or eight. As these children approached adolescence, there was a noticeable reduction in the number of activities in which they participated. In fact, a sharp decline has been reported in a number of studies of boys from thirteen to sixteen. Both boys and girls apparently become less spontaneous, less creative, and less versatile in their interests during this period. In the lists for older children, creative and individually expressive activities are rare among the favorites.

Several types of studies reveal this tendency. In studies of vocational preferences aviation, which held third rank for boys in the first grade, ranked first in the second grade. Its popularity is

maintained throughout the grades, although in the fifth grade it is preceded by medicine, and in the seventh grade by engineering. Many vocational preferences reflect simply illusory hopes; the "glamour" occupations and the professions constitute the bulk of the choice while employment in offices, stores, or shops is seldom mentioned. It appears significant, too, that very small numbers of children express an interest in following creative pursuits such as art, music, or writing.

Impoverished and meager interests characterize many children in the elementary school,⁵ and they appear on a correspondingly low level during adolescence. The static quality of the ideational life and attitudes of boys during the period from thirteen to sixteen is vividly set forth by another investigator.⁶ During this important period there is little alteration in many attitudes and values. As the boy grows older, he narrows his range of activities and spends larger blocks of his time in fewer activities. The "big four" activities in the "passive-spectator" category include listening to the radio, going to the movies, riding in an auto, and watching athletic sports. These and other passive types overshadow—indeed replace—active or creative pursuits. It is clear, then, that the task of the teacher involves the selection and intensification of worthy interests and the cultivation of new and genuinely worthwhile interests. In this effort, experience in reading will prove a valuable aid.

Reading and Science Interests

The first evidence of children's reading interests appears when they seek stories to be read or told to them. When about five and six years of age they prefer profusely illustrated factual stories, animal and

nature stories, jingles and poems. Their interests are already well defined and varied; the first grade teacher needs abundant and diversified materials—stories to be read to children and to be read by boys and girls when they are able to use printed materials profitably.

One of the first reports of the reading interests of young children emphasized the primary school child's liking for surprise and plot as elements of interest.⁷ Animal stories appealed strongly to boys while stories dealing with children and with familiar places held a greater appeal for girls. There was no evidence of an especially strong interest in stories of "pure fancy" or in "legends and folk tales." With advance in age, boys turned with pleasure to realistic tales in which the element of adventure was found. Girls continued to favor accounts of home life, and later showed a strong liking for romantic stories.

Other elements have been found to appeal strongly to pupils in the fourth, fifth, and sixth grades. One investigator lists these: adventure, action, excitement, thrill, mystery, realism, child life, humor, animal life and nature, sportsmanship and bravery, sports, and airplane and other inventions.⁸

Science interests become pronounced during the teens.⁹ In one study, library cards were checked to ascertain the scientific books circulating among children. Thirty-five favorites were selected and made available to groups of children and an observer recorded the children's reactions and their remarks. In addition, each child was interviewed concerning his preferences. The children displayed more discrimination

⁵ Editor's Note: See "Rounding Out Children's Kindergarten Experiences," By Gertrude E. Niemeyer. *Childhood Education*, March 1943, 19:316-321.

⁶ *Rediscovering the Adolescent*. By F. L. Dimock. New York: The Association Press, 1938.

⁷ *Interest Factors in Primary Reading Materials*. By F. W. Dunn. New York: Teachers College, Columbia University. Teachers College Contributions to Education No. 113, 1921.

⁸ *Reading Interests, Activities and Opportunities of Bright, Average and Dull Children*. By M. Lazar. New York: Teachers College, Columbia University. Teachers College Contributions to Education No. 707, 1937.

⁹ *Children's Choices in Science Books*. By A. M. Williams. New York: Teachers College, Columbia University. Child Development Monographs No. 27, 1939.

than is often attributed to them. They wanted accurate and valid information—detailed facts concerning how and why animals develop and things operate. Protests were voiced when a number of devices which adults often believe appeal to children were employed. In disfavor were the excessive use of personification, introductory "appeal-getting" essays permitting the authors' enthusiasm to be expressed and few facts to be introduced, and the time-worn device of introducing science through adult-child conversations.

If children were interested in a topic and had a real need for scientific information they employed successfully books of widely varied "reading difficulty." Thus eighth grade children might choose books of the fourth grade level and younger children might turn to books for older children. Finally, there was a considerable discrepancy between the adult judgment of appropriate reading material and the children's own choices. There was, however, noticeable agreement between the titles which adults preferred for their own use and those which children wished to read.

Children in the middle grades frequently report that they desire "more stories." It seems that there has been a scarcity of fine stories for boys and girls of this age group and that both the primary and the more advanced groups have fared better in this respect. This need for stories of literary excellence for middle grade children has long been recognized, but it is only recently that it has been met to a considerable degree.

Research in Semantics

Another important research movement is finding application in education. Teachers have been aware for a considerable period of time of the importance of vocabulary development. It is not surprising, then, that they are turning with enthusiasm to the new books on semantics and are find-

ing that their own convictions and attempts at clarifying communication are corroborated and reinforced by the emphasis in these volumes.¹⁰ They are attempting to insure that communication is clear and unequivocal as they lead boys and girls to recognize the varied meanings which different words have and how context determines meaning.

Perhaps the most important aspect of this endeavor is associated with conceptual terms. Words such as "honesty," "charity," and "democracy" illustrate this group. They form the "core" of the vocabulary in the social studies. And they frequently preclude communication, create confusion, and lead to misunderstanding or actual emotional disturbances.

Some teachers have developed ingenious methods in dealing with these words. One teacher follows this plan: The pupils make a list of new and confusing words that they encounter in the social studies books during each week. Several words are singled out as the most important in understanding the passages under consideration. These words are discussed by the children, who develop definitions for them. These definitions, at the end of a period of discussion, fall into two classes. The first includes those words whose meanings the children agree are reasonably adequate. In the case of many of these words there are sometimes several equally acceptable and meaningful definitions. These definitions are placed in *Our Social Studies Wordbook*. But the meanings and definitions of other words, after considerable discussion, are still not agreed upon as clear and acceptable. Committees are appointed to investigate these words further; they consult various sources for additional relevant information and submit the results of

¹⁰ See *Educational Method*, March 1942. The issue is devoted to semantics. In it the work of Lee, Richards, Walpole, Hayakawa, is discussed or reviewed.

the investigation for discussion at the next class meeting. In this way the meanings of many difficult words are clarified.

Teachers are finding that these activities have many far-reaching results; one is the development of attitudes of tolerance, mutual concern, and amity. Since part of the battle in achieving success in human relationships is won when language is clear and communication is unimpaired, attempts to help children understand words are indeed reassuring.

Predicting the Child's Development

No account of recent research would be adequate if it did not cite the results of the *Harvard Growth Studies*.¹¹ The study was started in the fall of 1922 when "approximately 3500 children who were entering the first grade of three cities of the metropolitan area of Boston were examined. In addition to twelve annually repeated physical measurements a battery of mental and scholastic tests was administered annually to these same children for as long a time as they remained in school."¹² Scores of various groups and sub-groups were compared on various intelligence tests given from year to year."

The following paragraph suggests the variability that might be found:

An I.Q. of 100, which is commonly interpreted as indicating average ability and a position near the center of an unselected group, represents on tests given for the first time, position varying from the 19th to the 65th percentiles. The position, therefore, of an I.Q. of 100, as indicated by the results of tests used in this study, ranges from one in the lower quarter of the group, representing an ability which is supposed to approximate dullness, to one near the upper third of the distribution, indicating brightness of a promising nature.¹³

Moreover, one may expect individual

¹¹ *Predicting the Child's Development*. By W. F. Dearborn and J. W. M. Rothney. Cambridge, Mass.: Science-Art Publishers, 1941.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 34.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 134.

growth curves to exhibit great fluctuations. Certain cases were selected:

In order to make a more extensive study of the fluctuations of individual mental growth curves (i. e., those who have the same points of origin); at age 8 there was a range of 35 points in their standard scores (i. e., the two most extreme cases were three and one half sigmas apart), yet at age 16 they had reached similar growth positions.¹⁴

The foregoing analysis was made of children who had reached the same terminal points at sixteen years of age. A similarly large variation was found at sixteen for those who started with identical mental ages at eight.

The charts and figures presented above reveal that great variations exist among cases. According to the average curves one might judge that cases having identical mental ages at 8 would have approximately identical mental ages at 16, but we find that individual fluctuations have been covered up in the smooth average curve. We cannot predict with certainty that a girl at age 8 will remain superior at age 16, or that children who start out below the average at an early age may not rise above the average at maturity.¹⁵

Thus, variability at every age level is found in this very careful longitudinal study. As a result the authors affirm two basic principles: (1) marked individual differences may be found among any age, sex, ethnic or maturity group at every period of measurement, and (2) marked variability in individual growth curves appears throughout the course of the growth period. (Italics ours.)

The principle of individual variability goes right to the root of such problems as the constancy of the I.Q., the use of height-weight tables, the prediction of time of maturity, prediction of age at which growth will cease and various similar problems. We have established the fact that variability rather than consistency in growth is the rule, that prediction except for averages of groups is hazardous (and even this is hazardous at the adolescent period), and that

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 179-180.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 184.

comparison with average procedures have little value in the study of individuals.¹⁶

Yes, these studies and others do strike deeply at basic problems and practices in education—the prediction of growth, classification and promotion of pupils, and many similar issues. Certainly the fair and thoughtful student must question the propriety of a number of administrative practices associated with mental testing. Despite the dogmatism of certain writers concerning these matters, there is a growing tendency on the part of school administrators to recognize the limitations of mental tests and other instruments and devices for establishing homogeneity and to seek more efficient and practical means of caring for individual differences. From our own experience and from critical examination of the studies in the field, we have concluded that this practice is usually unwarranted—at best a questionable makeshift. Moreover, there are certain philosophical and educational reasons for opposing attempts to provide homogeneous grouping in schools that serve a democratic society.¹⁷

A Question of Emphasis

Many administrative procedures are of course broadly and soundly conceived. My primary interest, however, does not center in these externals of the educative and learning process, worthy though they often are. Instead, my interest is directed toward the admirable work of countless men and women in humble and high places in the teaching profession who are making the classroom a place in which children are finding enriched and extended opportunities for continuous wholesome growth. My admiration is unstinted as I observe these people and their endeavor. As I work closely year after year with different groups

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 346.

¹⁷ "Is the I.Q. Controversy Philosophical?" By J. T. Walquist. *School and Society*, November 30, 1940.

in American education, I observe a steady increase among supervisors and classroom teachers in their concern for the development of boys and girls as happy, competent, and well-rounded personalities.

There is evidence of this tendency in many forms. One of the most notable and conspicuous of these is the published reports of teachers themselves who have recounted their experiences and adventures in the classroom.¹⁸ This activity is not isolated from the work of educational leaders and psychologists, for they have frequently participated directly with children and teachers in attempts to find solutions to pressing problems.¹⁹ Thus, psychologists, educators, administrators, supervisors, and teachers are uniting in constructive work in the classroom.

It is essential at the present time, I believe, that all persons in education work cooperatively in a determined effort to make steady gains on the relatively uncharted road which lies ahead. Tolerance, mutual understanding, and humility are demanded if progress is to be made. These efforts are needed daily in our schools and they are demanded also in scientific work. In the days to come we hope to see extension, application, and development of cooperative research upon fundamental problems of child development not yet explored. Important gains, we have seen, have already been reported.

¹⁸ *The Arts in the Classroom*. By N. Cole. New York: The John Day Co., 1940. *Mental Health in the Classroom*, Thirteenth Yearbook, Department of Supervisors and Directors of Instruction. Washington, D. C.: National Education Association, 1941. *They All Want to Write*. By Ferebee and others. New York: Bobbs-Merrill, 1939. *Pupils Are People*. By N. Appy. New York: Appleton-Century, 1941. "An Evaluation of Free Reading in Grades VII-XII." By L. LaBrant and F. Heller. Columbus, Ohio: Ohio State University Press, 1939. Contributions to Education, Ohio State University Graduate School. *Reading and the Educational Process*. By P. Witty and D. Kopel. Boston: Ginn and Company, 1939, Chapters IV and V.

¹⁹ One account of our own efforts has been described by T. K. Serviss in the October 1941 issue of *Educational Method*, "Teachers Study the Language Arts," 21:31-36.

Six-Year-Olds

Living in School

How growth and development take place in a school which recognizes that "The very life of the school is an emphasis on change as a characteristic of present-day life, and social cooperation is the keynote"; which "conceives of the curriculum as the way in which the school aids boys and girls to improve their daily living." Miss Geddie is assistant to Lilian Stevens, teacher of first grade at Lincoln School, Teachers College, New York City.

TWENTY SIX-YEAR-OLDS provide the theme for this story—twenty active, alert, intelligent, self-confident, imaginative individuals full of "'satisfiable curiosity.' Twenty six-year-olds, most of them blessed with the world's goods and with more than the ordinary powers of thinking, but each at varying levels of emotional, mental, social, and physical development. Twenty whole children—doers not just listeners—living together in this institution called "school."

There are schools and schools. Recently, a six-year-old friend of mine was telling me of some things he was interested in at home. I said, "What are you learning at school?" He answered, "Well, I'll tell you, we're just so busy there we don't have time to learn much." What an evaluation! It tells a whole story in itself of the strangle hold of the subject-bound, train-the-mind, cut-and-dried system. In a school which considers verbal responses the only ones possible many aspects of the child's life are

left unguided and, truly, he "doesn't have time to learn much."

Fortunate indeed are these twenty six-year-olds to be in a school which provides many opportunities for "harmonious and unified growth"¹; which recognizes that "the very life of the school is an emphasis on change as a characteristic of present-day life, and social cooperation is the keynote as opposed to individualism and authoritarianism"²; which "conceives of the curriculum as the way in which the school aids boys and girls to improve their daily living," and that "how to live is best learned in and through the process of living"³; in other words, as Dewey expresses it, school is life itself.

So a framework is provided for this important business of living: "*how* to think," not "*what* to think" in this changing world; how to integrate this "I" and "We" of the good life; how "to state his own view of the world"—"I say what I see in my own unique way" of the creative experience.

These six-year-olds have many people who help in their activities: "class teachers, special teachers and specialists . . . The special teachers have particular interests such as science, physical education, fine arts, industrial arts, or household arts. The specialists act in an advisory capacity. They include the physician, the psychiatrist, the

¹ "Integration in the Lincoln School Philosophy," by Lester Dix. *Teachers College Record*, February 1936, 37:363-71.

² "Life in the Elementary School," by Rebecca J. Comin. *Teachers College Record*, February 1936, 37:372-82.

³ "Curriculum Development," by L. Thomas Hopkins. *Teachers College Record*, February 1936, 37:441-7.

psychologist, the guidance director, and the curriculum specialist. The class teacher has a four-fold responsibility: that of individual and group guidance, of integrating the work of the class with that of the preceding year, of coordinating the activities of his or her group with those of the whole school and with those of the special teachers." And note this, "She is also responsible for developing *with the children* the content of the curriculum with the attending habits and techniques which a child or class needs in order to realize some end that is worth while."⁴

The flexible program is arranged in large blocks of time. It is uniform only in so far as it affects the necessary organization of the whole school. This is the "routine" for the daily living of the twenty six-year-olds:

records might help us to see. Informally stated, they reflect a consideration of the needs, interests, and purposes of children:

Mon. Sept. 21. David B. and John played with blocks. Everyone else crayoned. I called the children over and introduced them to each other. They gave the names of schools they had attended. They explored the program. They found that they needed names for the pictures they drew. A few could write. We toured the room to find out where things were kept—workshop, bookshelves, blocks.

Tues. Sept. 22. Conference as to building with blocks. Conversation at luncheon concerning summer experiences, things they want to learn, and things they need to learn.

Wednesday, Sept. 23. At the lunch table Robert asked to tell us of his summer experiences in Maine. Hobart told us about his garden in which he grew lettuce, radishes, beets. Everyone told where he had spent the summer. "Let's get a map!" "Let's plant a garden!"

Out of such conversations grew their first

LINCOLN SCHOOL.

LINCOLN SCHOOL						Grade I
Fall 1942-1943						Miss Stevens Room 112
Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	
8:50	Group Activities ⁵	Science	Fine Arts	Pottery	Fine Arts	
9:40		Physical Education				
10:10		Luncheon and Discussion				
10:30		Reading				
11:00		Beginning Writing and Number Work				
11:30		Rest				
		Reading				
12:00-12:30	Music	Beginning Writing and Number Work				
		Activities				
						Music

How Does It All Begin?

So it begins: this living together. How do we start? What happens? Some excerpts from the notes of the teacher's anecdotal

geography and science experiences. A trip was made to another room to point out on a big map the places "where I spent the summer." That "let's-get-a-map-for-ourselves" thought persisted and resulted in a map of the United States being placed in their room later in the year. The science teacher was called in on the "let's-plant-a-garden" idea. Questions burst forth:

"Life in the Elementary School," by Rebecca J. Coffin. *Teachers College Record*, February 1936, 37-372-82.

37:372-82.
*Activities are centered in individual and group interests. The materials used at this time will depend on the activity and may be selected from among many, such as: blocks, books, dramatization materials, pictures, wood, clay, paints, crayons, writing and number materials.

"What do seeds look like?"

"How many days does it take for seeds to come up?"

"What things do you put on plants to make them grow?"

"How do you take care of plants?"

Next a chart appeared—their first group reading experience:

We shall make a garden.

We shall plant seeds.

Guess what we shall plant.

One, two, three guesses!

"Rattle the can to tell from the sound the size of the seeds."

More charts followed as the program for the day was planned:

We have science on Tuesday.

We go to fine arts on Wednesday.

We go to pottery on Thursday.

We go to fine arts on Friday.

Moving about freely, then, through the halls, to the roof for play; to the gym for games; to a quiet room for rest; to the health office for what they call their "fig-gicles" (physical examinations); developing their bodies; creating in wood, clay, paint, music and rhythms; expressing their experiences in dramatic play; learning to relate meanings with symbols in reading; clamoring for "let me tell you my idea" in "talking time"; learning that the "I" must consider the "We" in social planning—"learning to live through guided living," these six-year-olds.

We Investigate and Dramatize the World Around Us

Then comes a day in the teacher's diary of events when this appears:

David B. Shy—seems a bit lost. Told us of a grocery store in his apartment building. "Let's go!"

There are not many trips we can take this year because of the gas situation, but we can walk over to David's house. We discuss what the groceryman does for us; what foods we cannot get now and why. We

make plans for walking through the crowded streets and traffic of the city and one day we really go. These charts, read in the group and later made into small books for the children to take home, tell the story:

OUR TRIP TO DAVID'S STORE

We went to the store.

It was a grocery store.

It was in David's house.

Guess what we saw!

We saw apples!

We saw eggs!

We saw milk!

We saw many things!

We liked David's store.

We liked the groceryman.

He laughed and laughed.

We had fun.

We went up in the elevator.

It was an automatic elevator.

We rode up! We rode down!

Up and down!

David's mother gave cookies to us.

We liked the cookies.

They were good cookies.

Yum! Yum! Yum!

They did "have fun." They did learn something of the importance of food in the lives of people. They did gain some appreciation of the goods and services in our city. They began to see themselves in larger relationships. David, the hero of the story, was not as shy. He became more a part of the group. Although he already knew how to read, he asked to have a book made for him, too. "My story. My book."

Through dramatic play, these six-year-olds began to show their feelings in a world at war. The teacher's notes say:

Tommy and Wendell are good builders.

Army Airplane. Battleship (Look out!)

The play on the roof with the larger blocks; the making of big bombers, pursuit planes, destroyers, the "ack-ack-ack" at imaginary guns caused discussions among the staff as to how best to guide this war play. The decision was made to encourage

the understanding and building of planes and ships, to ban the loud "boom-booms" and "ack-ack-acks" as they would ban other loud noises—from the principle of consideration for others; but to accept these seemingly war-like creatures as simply expressing, interpreting, and getting rid of some of the tensions they felt in their everyday lives.

This type of expression along with a recognition by the teacher that we are living in an increasingly air-minded world led to the choice of airplanes as one of the important interests of the year. Beginning with the Flying Fortress, interest was led into the Wright Brothers' plane, the passenger plane, and many other types of aircraft. These considerations were advanced by the six-year-olds:

My daddy flies a Flying Fortress. It is a very important airplane. It is a modern plane, too. It can fly very high. It can drop bombs just where it wants them to go.

After this field was explored came the questions from the teacher:

"Have there always been planes? How did planes come to be? What different types are there now?"

Pictures, books, and other sources of information were brought in, discussed, and consulted. A group trip to the LaGuardia Air Field was not possible, but many individuals made the trip and shared their experiences. This interest during the first four months of school and still continuing resulted in big planes made with blocks—"planes we can get in ourselves"; small ones done in paint and clay; then, of necessity, a large air field built of blocks on the floor to hold the many planes built of wood.

Surprising was the searching for detailed information and the many group and individual discussions needed in order to achieve the Wright Brothers' plane built on the floor with blocks by John and David Patek. The six-year-olds made this story:

This airplane was made by the Wright Brothers. They flew it at Kitty Hawk, N. C. It stayed up in the air for over thirty minutes. It was the first plane that could fly. It had an engine to keep it in the air. It had runners for landing. It was called a biplane because it had two wings.

It is impossible for us ground creatures to realize the interest, the fund of information, the firsthand experiences with flying, the photographic instances, the perfectly natural way in which these six-year-olds approach this topic of planes.

That there is no mass movement nor need for it in this experience is evidenced by Ellin's frank assertion, "I'm not the least bit interested in airplanes! I'm going to make a house for my dolls." So it came to be—a doll house built by Ellin and Ursula directly adjacent to the air field.

Soon the added number of planes, the "z-z-z-z" sounds, the increased activity in that area led to a discussion as to whether "homes" should be allowed that close by. "It isn't safe; besides we need more room for hangars."

"Well," said Ellin, "it's too noisy for the children there anyway." So the little house and its occupants were moved to another corner of the room. Later, when Ellin's turn came to work with wood, she decided to make a doll bed to accommodate two new members of her small family—twin dolls made of her two white socks. Oblivious to the flights around her she very contentedly set about her task, choosing just the right color of paint, achieving a comfortable mattress, and sewing away on the chintz flounces for the four-poster. . . . And so life goes on.

Reading and Writing Come Into Their Own

In October come these recorded events:

John King left for Texas today. We traced his trip on the map. We received a letter from Virginia's Aunt Tattie. We sang *Deep in the Heart of Texas*.

"Aunt Tattie" is from Texas, too, you see. She has been corresponding with us throughout the year. Now John and his mother write to us, too. Manful were the struggles of the six-year-olds to learn to write in order to achieve proper replies to these important letters! Exciting were the days when mail came for them! I must quote from one of Aunt Tattie's letters so that you will understand the beginning of a big interest:

"... And so John King is coming to Texas! What part of Texas? I wonder if I will see him before I go back to New York?

"On Friday I mailed a present to all of you, and I wonder if you can guess what it is. It is something alive, and I put little holes in the box so he can get air while on the long journey from Texas to New York. He lived in the meadow near Samuel's house. He has horns on his head, but he is not related to a cow or a sheep or a goat. He has four legs and a tail, but he is not a dog or a cat. He is spotted, but he is not a tiger. I do not know what he eats. Perhaps you could experiment with different things and find out. If you have no box the right size to keep him, you can lariat him out by tying a string around his horns, with the other end of the string fastened firmly to something. But please be careful not to hurt him when you tie the string around his horns, and don't let anybody step on him. I would be glad to know what you decide to name him."

Here are the answers dictated to the teacher and written by the children:

"Dead Aunt Tattie: Thank you for the horned toad you sent." (David P.) "Your letter came a day after the toad arrived." (Danny.) "We didn't get a chance to guess first what was in the box." (King.) "We watch him every day. He climbs and climbs." (Peter.) "He climbs all around his cage and up the sides." (Joan.) "We tried to feed him a piece of meat." (Wendell.) "We hung the meat on a piece of string in the cage. (Robert.) "His back felt prickly and his horns were sharp. (Alice.) "When we picked him up his tummy felt soft." (Ellin.) "We voted for the name we wanted for the toad." (Carolyn.) "The names we picked were Toey, Toady, Spotty, Horney, Texas, and Prickly." (Tommy.) "The name that won was 'Tex'. (Dale.)

Later, the six-year-olds dictated to the student teacher the following summing-up of this story of "Tex" which appeared in an issue of the school newspaper:

OUR TOAD

One day a package came for us. It was in a little box wrapped up in brown paper. It had holes in so we knew it was something alive. We tried to guess what was in the box. We said maybe it was a turtle or a toad or a canary. It was a horned toad all the way from Texas.

We tried to find something to keep him in. Miss Stevens went to Miss Bergen, our science teacher, and got a cage for him. It was like a little house.

The next thing was to get him to eat. We went up to the cafeteria and got some raw meat to feed him. We tied the meat on a string and sat in a circle to watch Virginia Hubbell feed him. She got to feed him because it was her Aunt Tattie that sent us the toad. The toad just hopped around and only looked at the piece of meat. Then we gave up trying to feed him and put him back in his cage. He would only drink water.

We kept him about a month and he got lost twice. The first time we found him in the corner and the other time he was under the radiator. We played with him almost every day and one day we built a play yard for him with our blocks. We put grass in it so he could run around in it.

Every day he grew thinner and thinner so before Christmas Virginia took him home with her. She was going to send him back to Texas so he could get the kind of food he liked.

Dear Aunt Tattie, we do thank you for Tex.

One day at lunch time the teacher asked, "How many of you really did read your books to your fathers and mothers?" Almost every hand went up. "What did they say about your reading?"

Dale said, "My father said that it was the first long story I ever read to him and he was just so proud of me!"

From Virginia Hubbell, "My mother thought I read *very* well."

John King, "My mother was just so pleased that she jumped right up from down on her bed!"

Peter's mother later told his story:

Peter came home and read his first book to all the family. We all sat around and listened. When we finished, Sophia, the four-year-old said, "Well Peter, you can read only one book out of all the books there are in the world!"

So come the renewed efforts, the painstaking work, the fun of discovering new ways of developing and using this important new skill—"reading to learn," not just "learning to read." These six-year-olds bring in books every day; poetry books, picture books, story books, books of information ("We need these to tell us things"), old books, new books, some to have read to them, some they read to all of us and to each other, and many happy hours are spent with "all the different kinds of books in the world."

Learning from Living

Life is not all fun and frolic. Bob's "I won't build with Wendell" brings a suggestion, "Wendell has very good ideas."

"Yes, but my ideas are better and, anyway, he won't obey me!" It takes a group discussion and a real struggle within Bob before he begins to achieve a realization that he must adjust himself to working with others.

Equally important is the event when "good" Carolyn says, "Will you be quiet! I want to tell you my idea!"

"It's just a part of growing up," the teacher says many times. So it is. How many of us as adults are still not grown up in our

understanding of self-discipline—not control from without; of how to relate, to integrate these conflicting qualities of liberty and equality! How better to learn these important meanings than in real living situations?

"No marks, no gold stars" mark—or is it hamper—the progress of these six-year-olds. Frequent conferences with the aim of helping the child to develop in all his potentialities and in the best ways of growth result in a common understanding between parent and teacher. Informal records of the child's behavior in terms of his reactions, relationships with others, interests, aptitudes, and attitudes are passed on to the next teacher so that there can be continuous development.

If the people most concerned were telling you this story, they would not leave out the beginnings of "Our Bambi Show" and the puppets they made for it, their Thanksgiving and Christmas joys, their sharing of plays and stories given by older groups in the assembly periods. Busy days, varied experiences, rich living, emerging values for the six-year-olds—the story doesn't end here. The adventures of these small people go on wherever they are. There are never enough ways to satisfy that "'satisfiable' curiosity." There is never enough time to explore the fascinating possibilities of living in a thrilling, exciting world.

A Very Good Friend

By Leah Ain Globe

Modeling clay is a very good friend,
Not so stubborn that it won't bend,
Not so soft that it will melt,
Firm enough to make itself felt,
And cheerful enough to want to do
Whatever my fingers tell it to.

Laughing Together

"In a good laugh we feel fret and care slip from us and well-being take their place," says Miss Green in this article developed from a study of children's laughter. But do three- and four-year-olds laugh for the same reasons and at the same things as do older children and adults? What can we learn about children and their development as social beings from observations of their laughter? Miss Green, director of the nursery school department at Green Acres School, Bethesda, Maryland, gives some answers to these questions.*

CRINKLES ON THE BRIDGE of a small freckled nose, head tilted back, wide open mouth, row of white teeth, and chortles. That's Dick laughing!

In front of him, another small boy's body folded together in the middle like a jackknife, head bobbing up and down, hands with palms down in relaxed rag doll gesture, slapping the floor and laughter woven like a thread in and out, through the activity—that's Harry.

This is Group Life! This is Laughter! Let's relish the joke. Let's listen in.

On closer scrutiny this is what we hear and see. There is a patterned game in progress. Every now and then Harry shoots out a little doubled up fist at Dick asking, "What's in it?" Then without waiting for Dick's answer, Harry sings out with finality,

* Editor's Note: This article is based on a more extensive study of three- and four-year-olds' group behavior, yet to be published. The part given here on laughter is but an excerpt. Therefore it touches upon only a few of the meanings which laughter has for young children. This study was made possible by the Department of Studies and Publications of The Bank Street Schools, New York, and by the Harriet Johnson Nursery School with which Miss Green was associated for six years.

"Nothing!" emphasizing this by exhibiting an empty palm. They both laugh uproariously. This is an altogether delightful joke, and a large part of the delight is in the social exchange which is taking place.

It is difficult for us to visualize the paucity of children's social techniques and the many obstacles which stand in the way of their social interchange. Even when speech is fairly well established, they are apt to use the more primitive approach to another child. Ted feels friendly toward one of the little girls and wants to give her a broom. He doesn't say so to her. What does he do? He goes up to her and pokes it gently at her. With what result? She is busy with her own pursuits and does not heed him. He pokes a little harder. She still ignores him. This time he ends up by a rather vicious jab, apparently followed by complete desertion of the idea, for he trots off to another part of the room, and the broom drops to the floor. Complete misunderstanding!

But laughter is a universal language and Harry and Dick have discovered this for themselves. When Harry looks up at Dick's pink and white apple face and sees the funny screwed-up laughter wrinkles on his nose and about his eyes, he knows that he is the one who has caused these changes, and this is enough. This is success, and since nothing succeeds like success, Harry will repeat the performance at some future date, though it may be with variations.

At what kinds of things do three-and four-year-olds laugh? What is their significance? Why do they laugh? Laughter and smiling have interested many writers, and the subject has been discussed from various

angles by philosophers, psychologists, neurologists, and others from the time of Plato¹ to the present when the emphasis has been placed upon the empirical type of study. Many theories as to the causes of laughter have been advanced, but there is evidence to show that it cannot be ascribed to any one cause. In the studies of nursery school children, it has been found that a large variety of situations give rise to laughter and that it must be explained in terms of multiple causation. Its relation to muscular activity and its social element have been noted in a number of studies.²

From studying many children at this age and taking careful day-to-day records, we see that the laughter situations, for convenience sake, may be arranged in rough categories, according to the dominating element in each. It will also be apparent at the start that one laughter situation may easily combine two or more elements and thus could rightly fall into other categories as well. These classifications are arbitrary.

Others equally revealing could easily be substituted. Examples from two categories—testing out reality and group jokes—are included here.

Testing Out Reality

Again and again we find evidence that joking and laughing constitute one way

¹ *Philebus*. By Plato. New York: Oxford University Press, 1892. Third edition. P. 624.

² Excellent reviews of the literature on the causes of laughter will be found in: *A Study of Laughter in the Nursery School Child*. By W. Blatz, K. Allin, and D. Millichamp. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1936. Pp. 5-7. *Laughing and Crying of Preschool Children*. By C. Brackett. New York: Teachers College, 1934. Child Development Monograph, No. 14. Pp. 1-7. *An Observational Study of the Laughter of Three-year-old Children*. Unpublished master's thesis. By A. Gregg. New York: Columbia University, 1928. Pp. 6-19. M. Jones in *Handbook of Child Psychology*. C. Murchison, Editor. Worcester, Mass.: Clark University Press, 1933. Pp. 290-292. "A Study of Laughter and Smiling of Preschool Children." By G. Ding and A. Jersild. *Journal of Genetic Psychology*, June 1932, 40:461-71. "A Genetic Study of Laughter-provoking Stimuli." By F. Justin. *Child Development*, 1932, 3:120. *Social and Emotional Development of the Preschool Child*. By K. Bridges. London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner and Co., 1931, P. 193. "Laughter in the Preschool Child." By M. Kendrine. *Child Development*, 1931, 2:230. *A Study of the Laughter of the Pre-school Child in the Merrill-Palmer School*. By A. Enders. Papers of the Michigan Academy of Science, Arts, and Letters. New York: Macmillan Company, 1927, 8:352.

that little children test out their knowledge. They have their own world of imagination and they use different ways of testing out what is real and what is imaginary, and laughter is one of those ways. It may be that in an attempt to clarify things in their own minds, they make up play versions contrary to known facts. Possibly children do this because they are still a bit unsure about their facts. They may use joking as a way of reassuring themselves. We find this need for reassurance very prevalent in the young child's attempt to orient himself in relation to other people as a distinct personality, as an individual differing from others and yet the same. He makes many jokes about it in his attempt to understand.

It is dinner time at nursery school. It is pleasant to sit at a small green table, just the right size for your short legs; very pleasant to be able to scuff your feet rhythmically now and then when just sitting becomes too tedious; and pleasantest of all to be in the company of your own bibbed kind. Ben hears the scraping of other spoons just like his in other yellow dishes just like his. He feels the sociability of it all. He wants to start something. He has been at nursery school for half a year now. He knows everybody's name, even the teachers, Miss S. and Mrs. B. So he starts a game. Children at their play like to imagine that they become someone else; it is this sort of a game which Ben starts.

He points to Mrs. B. and says, "Who's that?"

Miss S. reassures him, "You know, Ben." Ben: "Miss O." (Naming another teacher.) He laughs and his eyes twinkle. He looks at Miss S. and says, "You Jeremy!" This is followed by more laughter. His teacher joins in the joke, looks at Ben and says, "You're Arnold."

Arnold, laughing and excited, catches on to the joke, "And I'm Ben."

Esther: "And I'm Phyllis."

The teacher sees that Phyllis, younger than the rest, looks somewhat bewildered and comes to the rescue again in her reassuring way, assigning a part to Phyllis, "And Phyllis is Esther."

Ben, pointing to Gordon: "You're Jeremy." More laughter.

But Jeremy's distressed protest, "No, no, I'm Jeremy and he's Gordon," tells us that Jeremy is not oriented enough in regard to his own identity to take this as a joke. Not being secure, this constitutes a serious threat to him as a person.

Again reassurance from his teacher, "He's only pretending. It's only a game." Jeremy is satisfied and able to laugh, along with the others. It should be very clear that the teacher does nothing that would disturb or confuse the child's ideas about his own identity.

Mrs. B., the teacher, clarifies it for everybody: "It's a funny joke." More laughter.

But Ben has had enough of his own joke. Is he really a bit fearful—afraid of losing his own identity? He announces with finality to his teacher, "Now you are the mother—you the mother—and I Bennie." The joke is over.

A month before this, Timothy had exhibited the same sort of interest. He saw Jack on Lucy's bed and with a twinkling eye remarked, "Jack is Lucy."

It is possible that children use a joking method to test the validity of their own thinking. Timothy asked, "Know what makes boys' mouths red?" His teacher asked, "What?" He grinned and replied, "Beets." (Beets had been served at dinner the day before.) Now Timothy is interested in color. He likes red particularly. He has observed people's red lips and mouths, red even when they're not eating beets; very red, often extending from ear to ear, when you're three or four and having beets for dinner at nursery school! If it is true that this is Timothy's way of doing re-

search on this problem which is puzzling him, an understanding adult will draw him out to help him integrate his thinking.

Group Jokes

As we watch these children from day to day, from month to month, throughout the year, we gradually become aware of certain trends and patterns in regard to laughter that occur again and again. A child repeats a phrase of some sort which brings out laughter on the part of another child. For example, a whole series of "know who—know what" jokes developed. As illustration of this Paula, chatting with Kate, starts her old joke, "Know what else I got home? A great big . . ." (exact answer not heard by recorder) but Kate is "in on the joke" and knows what is expected of her. Kate: "Know what else I got home? Nothing." Both laugh. Paula now takes up the game. "Know what I have in school—a great big—of nothing." She squeaks with delight and both laugh again.

In some such fashion, the joke gets passed about from child to child, tossed back and forth like a ball, with variations and elaborations added. These group jokes are often the beginning of a group solidarity among three-and four-year-olds. It gives one a feeling of "belonging." It is really the same kind of thing that happens in other social groups and has produced phrases like, "That's a standing joke in our family."

The children in the group may get hold of some one word or phrase with an amusing sound and use it throughout the year. Whenever they wish to produce an effect on their peers, the word is whisked out with a flourish and bandied about—the magic word that serves as an entree. With this particular group of children, the word "Nothing" with its quality of mystery was used in this way:

Andrew arrived first. When Kate came, he stood about and watched her take off her outdoor clothing. His teacher asked him what he wanted to work at today. He answered, "Nothing." Then he and Kate both laughed, thinking it very funny.

Sometimes the word itself may have an amusing sound. "Boobershin" and "Mrs. Boobershin" became a standing joke with one group, as did "Mister Bamboo" with another. This latter phrase was started and largely perpetuated by a child whose language facility was not up to that of most of the others. Kurt had just come from Germany where he had heard German used most of the time. We might read into his continual use of this "stock joke" a tendency for the child who has difficulty in getting himself before the group in other ways to fall back on this technique as a method of making his social contacts with the group. Kurt would often accompany the *word* joke of "Mr. Bamboo" with a *physical activity* joke of his whole body, arms outstretched, facial grimaces, tumbles on the floor. He was always ready, too, to pick up the *word* jokes which others started.

Martin says, "I have, Mr. Googee," and this is taken up immediately by Kurt who echoes, "I have, Mr. Googee," then by Delia and Adison, all smiling, all considering it funny. Kurt adds a variation, "I have, Mr. Scogie."

Sometimes these group jokes involve as many as four or five other children. They gather impetus as they are passed about and may take on the quality of a snowball rolled in fresh snow, retaining their crude, elemental qualities but gathering something new before being tossed on again.

It is dinner time. Perhaps there is jello for dessert and the word "jello" is the punk that sets off these firecrackers of mirth. Or perhaps you just feel a bit aggressive and you've heard some older children in the street talking about punching in this rhyming, chanting sort of way. Anyway, someone starts, "Ice cream and jelly, I'll

punch you in the belly," and several children laugh. Donald's imagination is fired. He likes the sound and looks about him for inspiration. Then announces, "Ice cream and jelly, I'll punch you in the window." He has lost sight of the rhyming quality of the original but it doesn't bother him one bit. Andrew joins in, contributing, "I'll punch you in the pepper." This is a big success. Everybody laughs. He is spurred on and follows it in rapid succession with "I'll punch you in the cookie—in the salt—in your own house." His final dramatic touch, "I'll punch you in the robber's house" has a mystery thriller sound to it.

Deborah and Kate don't want to be left out. Deborah, drawing on Andrew's house idea and combining it with something she sees before her says, "I'll punch you in the table's house." Kate: "I'll punch you in the crayon." Donald returns to the arena with, "I'll punch you in the fish," and is received with great shouts of enthusiasm. The original rhyming quality, accidentally or not, we do not know, creeps back as the game ends up with Donald's, "I'll punch you in the knickknack, ticktack."

All this nonsense is hard for many grownups to take, but when we get a glimpse of its meaning to these children as a beginning step in group consciousness, we are on the road to understanding life as it is lived at this age. It enables us to see nonsense as fitting into the togetherness quality of a group, which we are describing in its various forms. Indeed, it is probably not exaggerating to say that nonsense is one of the chief ways that small children achieve some degree of solidarity in their group living.

Values

Some of the values inherent in laughter have been hinted at as we have watched these children skip-hopping through their

(Continued on page 432)

By AUGUSTA M. SWAN and CATHERINE M. COWSILL

Five-Year-Olds

Learn About Food

Awareness on the part of the school staff of the need to improve nutrition and health habits was their motivation for giving emphasis to the importance of food in the everyday experiences of these five-year-olds. Miss Swan was formerly the kindergarten teacher at West School and Miss Cowsill is a nutritionist in the home economics department of the Washington, D. C., public schools.

THE PROMOTION OF HEALTH is a challenge to present-day education and requires the cooperation of all available resources. The principal, teacher, medical inspector, nurse and nutritionist from the home economics department worked together in the West School kindergarten, and organized a health project which became functional in everyday living.

The program started in the fall with the physical examination of the children. Many cases of malnutrition and difficult feeding problems were revealed. The nutritionist held conferences with individual mothers who reported that the children refused to eat breakfast, drink milk or eat vegetables. As a result the nutritionist was asked to visit the school for weekly lessons during the year.

These lessons have been integrated with the work of the classroom concurrently with the principal unit of interest, thereby doubly impressing upon the minds of the children the importance of building healthy bodies. In September the unit of interest was a large house the children were building. The story, *The Three Little Pigs*, brought out the importance of the right kind of building materials so they kept a list of the things that went into the making of their house. They compared them with the materials needed for building their own bodies.

Just before Thanksgiving the house in the

classroom was finished and the study of the farm was begun. A number of animal pictures was brought in, showing the difference in growth between the animals which had been fed on milk and those in whose diet milk was lacking.

As Thanksgiving approached and the barn in the kindergarten grew from day to day, we talked of the many good things which came from the farm. Pictures of protective foods were hung in our health corner, with an especially attractive poster of a one hundred per cent breakfast. Setting the table for a one hundred per cent breakfast became a favorite game, and going to market to select the proper articles was dramatized many times. Many of the children were really eating one hundred per cent breakfasts at home.¹

Throughout these weeks there had to be much repetition of the importance of the right kind of food, but much of the motivation came from the children themselves who were always ready to tell of any change in their eating habits. The children were weighed again, and we found that since September each child had made a gain in weight. This of course was also pleasing to the parents who had been working with us.

In January the school had a luncheon, and the children suggested items for the menu. Many articles were brought from home, and the children were interested in finding them on the charts of protective foods. The cooperation between home donations and school lessons made our building luncheon more successful than usual.

Later in our program, through discussions of the various means of travel, we discovered what made trains and busses go. This transportation study enabled the children to see that they too must have the right foods to play or run well, again reminding them of the "go foods."

Easter found us learning that rabbits eat the same fresh vegetables we do, and that they espe-

¹ The one hundred per cent breakfast recommended by the nutritionist consisted of fruit, cereal, toast, butter, milk. Other foods, of course, may be included.

cially enjoy raw carrots, lettuce and other green leaves which were stressed in our protective diet. Group discussions of the rabbits' food and the coming of spring suggested a garden. As the seeds and plants arrived we made a list of requirements necessary for the growth and strength of each plant and then made another list for the proper growth of children. It was fun to discover that children need the same attentions—sunshine, fresh air, rest, water and food to grow strong and healthy.

The garden proved such a success that we decided to have a party so that the parents might enjoy it with us. On this occasion the nutritionist spoke to the parents of the work done with the

children during the year and urged its continuance for the summer vacation. Health punch was served by the mothers from one of the arbors in the garden.

The interest in nutrition has been continued in the first grade, and the children are now able to read in books and on posters the early lessons they learned in the kindergarten. Suggestive talks with individual mothers who visited the school, the improved health of the children, fewer absences during the winter months, individual weight charts showing gains in growth, and changed food habits of the family show that our efforts have been carried over into the homes and that they function in everyday life.

We Report Two Conferences

NATIONAL PROGRAMS FOR CHILDREN. Nation-wide concern over delayed action in programs for children was responsible for a conference with the Executive Board of the Association for Childhood Education in Washington, D. C., April ninth and tenth. Thirty-four people from seventeen states and the District of Columbia who had expressed concern either to the American Association of University Women or the Association for Childhood Education were invited by these two organizations to present in person the details of their problems and to discuss a general policy in administering programs for children.

An over-all view of the federal situation and reports of local situations were presented at the first morning session.¹ At the Friday afternoon session, heads of government agencies concerned with the education and welfare of children described their programs and interpreted the policies and legislation governing them. Subsequent discussion centered about the following questions and these decisions were made by the group:

1. Shall we work for a coordinated federal program for the care of children of working mothers? It was agreed that the federal government has a responsibility to help state and local communities establish adequate child care programs. It was agreed that members of this group should work for further coordination between federal, state and local programs.

2. What government agencies should be responsible for planning, administering, and carrying out such

a program? It was agreed that to achieve the optimal conservation of children as the nation's greatest resource we favor the grouping of educational and welfare activities for children in an agency most appropriate to that purpose and that we continue to urge that the programs be approved, operated, and supervised by the regularly constituted agencies for education, health and welfare at the national, state and local levels. The group commended the establishment of the Child Care Section in the Office of Defense Health and Welfare Services and agreed that such an agency provides a sound basis for national planning for children.

3. What steps need to be taken to educate citizens' groups to the needs of children and to the importance of obtaining the necessary services to meet them? It was agreed that members of the conference should present to their state and local communities the information obtained and the plans of action developed at this meeting in the hope that awareness of the needs of children, and interpretations of the function and responsibility of the federal government in education and welfare might result in more effective nationwide planning for children.

It was agreed that members of the conference should keep in touch with their congressmen, explain to them the problems involved, supply them with information, and enlist their support in obtaining needed legislation.

4. What are the responsibilities of national professional organizations in obtaining adequate programs for children? It was agreed that representatives of both the A.A.U.W. and the A.C.E. should attend and testify at hearings on legislation having to do with education and welfare of children. The group agreed to support the Thomas-Hill Bill (S. 637) and the Hayden Bill (S. 876) as interpreted to the conference by representatives of the National Education Association and the ODHWS.

It was agreed that the plan for child accounting developed by the Child Development Committee of the National Research Council under the direction of Lawrence Frank be made available to local Branches

¹ See *Childhood Education*, December 1942 and March 1943, for detailed descriptions of federal programs for children.

of the A.A.U.W. and the A.C.E. This plan would help local communities see more clearly the whole needs of all the children and stimulate unified programs of education and welfare in their behalf.

It was agreed that brief reports of this conference should be printed in the *Journal of the A.A.U.W.* and *Childhood Education*. These reports should emphasize the importance of citizen participation in government, the need for a cooperatively planned long-time national policy on child care and education, and the need for vigilance in preventing cuts and economies that jeopardize the welfare of America's children.

It was suggested that a national advisory committee be appointed, charged with the responsibility of supplying current accurate information on federal programs for children; of suggesting ways of implementing the child accounting plan; of studying the functional relationship between federal, state and local governments, and of suggesting ways and means of gaining public support of education.

The conference demonstrated the effectiveness of group inter-action that can take place in organizations functioning on a national as well as a local basis.—*Reported by Frances Mayfarth.*

COOPERATION IN TEACHER EDUCATION. The Council on Cooperation in Teacher Education called a joint conference of executive committees of national organizations concerned with teacher education, recruitment, and placement at the Shoreland Hotel, Chicago, March 27-30, 1943. Fourteen organizations were represented. The Association for Childhood Education was represented by Olga Adams, University of Chicago, and Edna Dean Baker, National College of Education.

Four working groups considered the problems of recruiting teachers, retaining teachers on the job, making adjustments in teacher education demanded by the war, and planning long-range programs for schools, including reconstruction following the peace. The printed report of the conference will be available later through the Council but certain recommendations are too urgent to wait for the more detailed report.

It was agreed by those present that the schools of the country face a very serious crisis. A recent national survey by the National Education Association reveals that during the present school year 189,000 teachers are new to their positions as contrasted with 93,000 in a normal year; that a total of 65,000 teachers left teaching, and that 37,000 emergency certificates have been issued to replace these qualified teachers. If this migration of teachers is not checked the schools will be seriously crippled and

will be unable to furnish vital war services.

One of the chief elements necessary to the retention of teachers and to their efficient performance is the increase of salaries. At the present time forty teachers in every one hundred are being paid less than \$1200 for the school year 1942-43; approximately eight in every one hundred are being paid less than \$600.

It was further agreed that "the public schools of the country are indispensable instruments of survival, that the suspension or serious crippling of their services in normal times would involve a serious national crisis—in time of war nothing less than a catastrophe." The conference expressed its conviction that the public schools constitute one of "the primary essentials to the successful prosecution of the war because:

1. The public schools are essential to the maintenance of a reservoir from which the nation may draw those to be trained for essential civilian and armed services.

2. The public schools constitute the only existing medium by which this reservoir of manpower can be given basic preparation with a minimum of cost and time.

3. The leadership of the public schools is essential to the nation's efforts to conserve its resources for the war effort in such areas as rationing, scrap drives and the like.

4. The public schools are an essential factor in controlling the problem of juvenile delinquency growing out of abnormal environmental conditions incident to the war emergency."

The Executive Board of the Association for Childhood Education, after receiving the recommendations of its representatives to the conference, urges its members to cooperate in every possible way in securing local, state, and national action to obtain funds for increasing teachers' salaries and for aiding the schools in functioning with maximum efficiency during this period, and to ask their congressmen to support bills for federal appropriations available to states and through them to local communities. The Association commends the Thomas-Hill Bill (S. 637) because of its equalization feature, the wide range of use to which the money can be applied in increasing teachers' salaries, and because it assures federal support without federal control of education.

It is particularly important for parents to realize what is happening to the schools. It is believed that if parents understand the situation confronting the whole country that they will demand better salaries for teachers, decent school housing, and an enriched curriculum to meet the needs of children and youth.—*Reported by Edna Dean Baker.*

Books . . .

FOR TEACHERS

OUR CHILDREN FACE WAR. By Anna W. M. Wolf. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1942. Pp. 214. \$2.00.

Mrs. Wolf tells us that the child's problems in wartime are not necessarily war-born, "but have their origins in the life problems and the vicissitudes of adjustment of a particular personality to the demands made upon it. Though war, like any other period of special strain, will heighten them and give them special coloring, an understanding of children in wartime depends, in the last analysis, on the depth of one's understanding of children's problems at all times."

The young child in wartime needs his mother's presence and personal attention. We should give the child simple directions about safety and frank explanations about the war, without dwelling unduly on the morbid and fearful. While a home atmosphere that "constantly feeds on rumor and hysteria is bad for children . . ." parents should not withhold "the basic facts of the war's effects on their own family and, if sorrow, death and disaster fall to their lot, the children should not be excluded from the grief of such an event."

"Sound discipline is sound in both war and peace," says Mrs. Wolf. "Without question, obedience has a very real place in the life of the little child," but should be needed less as the child grows older. "Children will be able to curb their own selfishness and make themselves face unpleasant tasks only if authority has come from a parent whom they both love and respect and who they feel loves them."

The chapter on "Women and the War" is chock full of concrete suggestions for the mother who is thinking about going to work away from home. It should be read, especially, by prosperous married women who have no children. "Idleness among women is intolerable as long as there are children and families who are in the dire need they are today." Mrs. Wolf believes that the place of the nursery school is to strengthen home ties, "to share the children with their parents at every step of the way, not

to take them from them in the belief that schools can do the job better."

In the final chapter, "The People's War," the author considers what parents should discuss with their younger and older children about the objectives of the war and the problems of peace after victory, making a strong appeal for wide tolerance.

In my judgment, *Our Children Face War* is by far the best book of its kind that I have seen. Teachers, parents and all others concerned with the care and protection of children now and after the war should consider this book a part of their "must" reading.—*Garry Cleveland Myers, Editor-in-chief of "Children's Activities," Chicago, Illinois.*

CHILD LIFE IN SCHOOL, A Study of a Seven-Year-Old Group. By Barbara Biber, Lois B. Murphy, Louise P. Woodcock, and Irma S. Black. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company, Inc., 1942. Pp. 658. \$3.75.

Seven-year-olds and children of the age groups immediately thereafter have never seemed to warrant so much study and attention, even on the part of the experienced elementary school enthusiast, as they do after reading *Child Life in School—A Study of a Seven-Year-Old Group*. In their very full volume of six hundred fifty pages the authors of this book have packed a veritable gold mine of suggestions for observation and study of individual children and for the interaction of children in a "psychological community." "Our approach," say the authors, "has more in common with the problems of ecology, of regional studies, of topological psychology, than it has with the approach which led to the development of intelligence scales on the basis of age norms. In fact, it should be mentioned in passing that the concept of levels of maturity and of stages in general has suffered from its superficial kinship to the norm."

Because the investigators possessed "skillful sensitivity in observation" and because they studied many aspects of behavior, the reader is con-

vinced of the validity of their observations and of their deductions and conclusions. The overt behavior of each of the ten children in the group of seven-year-olds who were studied is completely and specifically recorded. The patterns of action, thought and feeling of the group life are sampled in carefully authenticated ten-minute individual behavior records in some situations and through complete records of individual behavior throughout an entire period in other classroom situations. Performance tests, problem-solving and projective-play situations and the Rorschach Test are used in gathering evidence which together with recorded sampled behavior forms the basis for descriptions of the individual girls and boys in the group and for implications for education.

The reader feels well acquainted with Margaret, Amy, Carol, Allison, Virginia, Douglas, Christopher, Mark, Dick and Walter when he finishes the volume. Likewise he agrees with the authors that seven-year-olds are active and vigorous and expressive in physical behavior, interested in problems and situations that have dynamic structure or content and that the thinking of seven-year-olds evolves from particular to general, from concrete to abstract, from absolute to relative, and from here-and-now to distant-and-long-ago. Probably the most striking emphasis is that the seven-year-olds actively constructed their own group quite apart from adults and were capable of sustaining a group atmosphere of free and creative expression. All the children were discovered to have conflicts within themselves which affected all levels of their behavior:

"The fact that children at this stage of their development objectify many of their deepest feelings, attach them to people and things and ideas removed from themselves and their close familial ties, may well be one of the most important trends of which educators need to take account. The emotional value of this projection of feeling has been more cleverly recognized than have been the educational possibilities inherent in it."

The completeness of this study may make it forbidding to some readers. It is suggested that, as a source book, this volume of scientific research has limitless possibilities for use by students of child behavior and education as well as by practicing teachers and administrators. In quality the book is entirely comparable to its comprehensiveness.—*Bernice Baxter, Coordinator of Instruction, Oakland Public Schools, Oakland, California.*

YOU, YOUR CHILDREN, AND WAR. By Dorothy W. Baruch. New York: Appleton-Century Company, 1942. Pp. 234. \$2.00.

Dr. Baruch's latest publication, *You, Your Children, and War*, comes in answer to those questions of every adult citizen who is responsible in any way for growing children. The first and last chapters of this book bear the same title, "What Can I Do?" which is perhaps the most frequent question in the hearts of all of us in wartime. Psychological understandings to serve parents in solving the problems confronting them and in raising their own morale are discussed and illustrated in ensuing chapters.

The author stresses the fact that fear is natural, that it decreases when faced, and that children gain much through talking and playing out their fears. She suggests that children's talk of killing is often disguised talk of hostility toward family members who unwittingly press or block them. Hidden hostility may take disguised forms—behavior problems, delinquency, criminality, prejudice, intolerance, war. As Mrs. Baruch puts it, "Hostility well off the chest makes for peace." She therefore advocates that children be encouraged to express their feelings of hostility rather than to submerge them.

The essentials of democracy are set forth followed by discussion of what we can do at home and at school to make the democratic way of life real to growing children. The desire and ability of growing children and young people to help win the war is fully recognized. Suggestions are also made to help the homemaker to find her place in the war effort. The question of marriage in wartime is well handled. The fundamental needs of human beings for belonging, for affection and response, and for successful achievement are stressed as of particular importance if life is to be good in spite of war.

The structure of the content is excellent. Each chapter is a unit which is followed immediately by questions or statements which serve both as summary to the chapter and as bases for further thought and study. The book comes to a close with a "Code for Parents During War" which serves as a satisfying and deeply challenging summary of the entire volume.

You, Your Children, and War is recommended as a highly stimulating and thought-provoking volume which will be helpful to parents, teachers, and other adults responsible for the care of children.—*Marie Belle Fowler, New York State College of Home Economics, Cornell University.*

Books . . .

FOR CHILDREN

BOY OF THE WOODS: THE STORY OF JOHN JAMES AUDUBON. By *Marie Lounsbury Wells and Dorothy Fox. Illustrated by Elinore Blaisdell.* New York: E. P. Dutton and Company, 1942. Pp. 143. \$2.00.

Two authors and an artist have made the story of John James Audubon into a delightful book for children 8 to 12—especially those children interested in nature, the young members of bird clubs or Audubon clubs throughout our schools. The book is beautiful to look at, both in format and illustrations, and the story is told with due regard for authenticity and interest.

What a story it is! It would be almost impossible to write dully about Audubon. Young French elegant, transplanted to pioneer America, dazzling the young people with his skating, his dancing, his marksmanship; making friends with Indians; driving the oldsters wild with his carelessness in business and his impractical passion for birds, Audubon is always exciting to read about as he must have been to know. The authors have wisely chosen to emphasize his growing mastery of the art of painting birds and the problems and sacrifices involved in his study of them. *Boy of the Woods* is delightful biography, fictionalized in form, but authentic in general content.

TOM WHIPPLE. By *Walter D. Edmonds. Illustrated by Paul Lantz.* New York: Dodd Mead and Company, 1942. Pp. 70. \$2.00.

It is incredible that a poor, Yankee farmer boy should actually have engineered for himself a series of visits with the Czar of all the Russias. Mr. Edmonds vouches for the truth of this story and gives it to us with hilarious and convincing details.

Tom is the great American legend, the handyman, self-sufficient and self-respecting. Tom wants to see a bit of the world so he takes to the sea, Yankee fashion. He believes in himself, in his mother's recipes, in his home town and in the great U.S.A. Naturally with such roots, royalty cannot upset him. He gives the Czar an ap-

propriate present—an acorn, but of course not just an ordinary acorn. This one came from George Washington's home. Nicholas plants it with due ceremony after which he and Tom discuss tight money, milch cows and the way Supervisor Utley runs the town.

Once back in the U.S.A. it might all have seemed like a dream to Tom had it not been for the big be-jewelled watch the Czar gave him and the crochet for his mother. After all, as Supervisor Utley says, "Any American lad like Tom, here, can get along anywhere on earth."

Here is the great American tradition, still unbeatable. Children 8 to 12 should not miss it.

MAC GOES TO SCHOOL. By *Margaret L. Wynkoop. Photographs by Robert Yarnall Richie.* Garden City: Doubleday, Doran, 1942. Unpaged. \$1.00.

Here is another photograph book of school life, this time told through the endearing medium of Mac, a little Scottie, who attends the kindergarten. This is not a story but a little narrative of kindergarten activities as Mac shares them with the appreciative children. The text will prove pleasant reading for the primary and entertaining for the five-year-olds to hear.

STABLEMATES. Written and illustrated by *Margaret and Helen Johnson.* New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1942. Pp. 104. \$1.75.

Stablemates tells of the vicissitudes of Dick, a fine hunter, whose devotion to his sister colt, Daisy, brought him all his troubles and much of his joy. The two were trained together but when Daisy crashed a fence and Dick had to leap over her, it gave him such a fear of fences that he would not jump again. This, of course, ended his career as a hunter and his master sold him. The two devoted stablemates were separated for the first time and apparently forever. The stories of their mishaps, triumphs, and eventually their reunion make good reading for children 7 to 12 years old.

Bulletins . . .

AND PAMPHLETS

That Help One to Participate Intelligently in the War Effort

TOYS IN WARTIME. Suggestions to Parents on Making Toys in Wartime. Washington, D. C.: Children's Bureau, U. S. Department of Labor, 1942. Pp. 44. Price not given.

Suggestions for giving children opportunity to feel they are contributing to the war effort by cheerfully doing without toys made from essential war materials and by helping to make toys for younger children and for themselves.

A variety of simple toys is suggested: for a young child, toys to feel, to chew, to see or to hear; for a toddler, to build with or pull, and for older children to use in modeling, carving or weaving. A bibliography and drawings of home-made toys are included.

This bulletin is suggestive not only to parents but also to teachers looking for ideas for children's laboratory and independent work periods.

GUIDES FOR ESTABLISHING NURSERY SCHOOLS AND CHILD CARE AND DEVELOPMENT CENTERS. Education for Civilian Defense Bulletin No. 11. By Bureau of Child Development and Parent Education. Albany: New York State War Council and the New York State Education Department, 1942. Pp. 45. Price not given.

Information about desirable practices regarding budget, staff, physical facilities, program and equipment for the benefit of educational authorities providing day care for children two to five years of age for families in defense areas. Such details as the approximate cost of materials for equipment for fifty children, approximate salaries for staff members and approximate cost of food are given. Included, also, are lists of kitchen, housekeeping and sleeping equipment, and drawings to scale of lockers, easels and other apparatus which can be made easily.

INTER-AMERICAN EDUCATION DEMONSTRATION CENTERS. Report of Project, January-June 1942. By Helen K. Mackintosh

assisted by Juanita MacDougald Melchior. Washington, D. C.: U. S. Office of Education, 1942. Pp. 14. Price not given.

A summary of the program of the U. S. Office of Education in cooperation with the Office of the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs to promote friendship and genuine understanding between the Americas. It states the principles governing the project and gives essential features of officially designated centers in twenty-one states and the District of Columbia. It describes activities engaged in by schools—from elementary to universities and adult education classes—by libraries, churches, radios, workshops, publications, art museums, symphony societies and other clubs and associations. The importance of a continuous program is emphasized.

The report is significant to people interested in cooperative efforts on the part of national, state and local school people and to those who realize the importance of inter-American appreciation and cooperation.

TOGETHER WE SERVE. By Olga Jones for U. S. Office of Education, Washington, D. C.: U. S. Government Printing Office (for sale by Superintendent of Documents), 1942. Pp. 22. \$1.15.

Plans for organizing voluntary agencies to meet such needs as child care, health, nutrition and pre-marriage counseling, and their implications for educators. Of particular interest is a sampling of problems which indicate not only the need for many adjustments among voluntary agencies, but also opportunities for cooperation where the agencies are interested in the same general types of problems.

The pamphlet points the way to fuller participation by school officials in community planning and in coordinating community activities.

CONSUMER KNOWLEDGE HELPS WIN THE WAR. A Selected Bibliography of Available Pamphlet Materials, Bulletin No. 11. Washington, D. C.: Consumer Division, Office of Price Administration and Office for

Emergency Management, 1942. Pp. 54. Price not given.

An annotated bibliography of pamphlets that give information about consumer problems such as judging fabric quality and budgeting for health, recreation and insurance. Important for providing well-informed people who can act intelligently to strengthen living standards particularly necessary in wartime.

THE STORY OF FOOD PRESERVATION.

By Edith Elliott Swank, M.S. Pittsburgh: H. J. Heinz Company, 1942. Pp. 101. \$2.50.

An interestingly written account of man's struggle to provide himself with stores of food through the ages, and of methods of food preservation. An extensive bibliography contributes to the bulletin. The teacher's guide, prepared at the University of Pittsburgh, suggests units for children in grades four to nine and adds explanatory notes about the photographs which profusely illustrate the booklet.

This is an example of the manner in which commercial agencies are producing educational material at low cost for school use, subordinating the name of the agency. The bulletin may be used by primary teachers for reference and by pupils themselves in intermediate and upper grades.

UNITED NATIONS. Discussion Guide. By Vera Micheles Dean. Washington, D. C.: U. S. Office of Education, 1942. Pp. 12. Free while supply lasts.

A guide to help eliminate ignorance as to who the United Nations are, why they united, what they are fighting for, what they are doing to win, and whether or not they can stay united in peace. This pamphlet, published jointly by *Newsweek* and *Time* magazines and *The Reader's Digest* urges teachers to take the lead in seeing that every person in the United States understands the desperate need for pooling power if the war is to be won and peace secured after the war.

That Tell What Other Schools Are Doing

TOGETHER WE LEARN. Foreword by Paul J. Misner, Glencoe, Illinois: The Board of Education, 1942. Pp. 63. \$1.00.

An attractive easy-to-read booklet which makes the partnership between home and school

very close. Planned by parents, teachers and children, much of the writing was done by parents while the illustrations follow the ideas of the children's original drawings. It is full of suggestions for learning skills of living through doing fascinating things together in busy, interested lives. Conceived and planned before the outbreak of the war in America, it adds an after-word to emphasize that children's safety depends upon the strength, courage, fortitude and affection of the adults who surround them. The book is valuable for parents in creating a satisfying and secure life for children; and for teachers in suggesting ways of providing learning experiences that are rich in meaning and purpose.

THE PRIMARY MANUAL. A Teachers Guide. Kindergarten and Grades One, Two and Three. Curriculum Bulletin 95. By the School Staff, Claude V. Courter, superintendent. Cincinnati: Public Schools, 1942. Pp. 576. Price not given.

A comprehensive, detailed program for kindergarten and primary grades in which each major curricular area is treated in a separate section beginning with kindergarten and extending through grade three. It is planned with the hope that it will coordinate the primary program and stimulate improvement in curriculum and instruction. Every section contains suggestions for teachers looking for workable plans. "Speech Correction," for instance, gives causes and diagnostic and corrective measures for articulatory and voice disorders. Bibliographies follow every chapter.

SCHOOLS AWAKE. A Community Program in Van Buren County, Michigan. By George Schutt. Battle Creek, Michigan: W. K. Kellogg Foundation, 1942. Pp. 31. Free.

A significant report of how a rural community faced its problem of outmoded school equipment and dilapidated buildings, took stock of its assets and liabilities, stirred itself to study needs and finally attacked the problem of organizing schools to improve the situation. So encouraged was this district that it has prepared suggestions for other communities with similar problems and resources.

An interesting booklet for anyone who likes to watch enterprising people overcome obstacles and valuable to rural communities that need similar help.

Among . . . THE MAGAZINES

WARTIME ELEMENTARY EDUCATION.

By Lowry W. Harding. *The Journal of the National Education Association*, February 1943, 32:47-48.

A constructive program for the school. The school should help children clarify their confusions and solve their problems. At no time in history have children had greater problems nor have the responsibilities and opportunities of the school for doing a significant job of educating been more challenging. The following suggestions are offered as a point of departure in developing a wartime program of instruction in the elementary school:

(1) Increase emphasis upon the realities of war and the role which children of appropriate ages can play in total mobilization; (2) give psychological preparation for withstanding shock, horror, and emotional reactions; (3) coordinate, to the fullest extent, the inschool instructional program and the wartime activities and services of children; (4) modify the course of study in all ways where needs and lacks become apparent and more functional instruction can be offered.

Further suggestions are: (1) reduce the pressure upon children in the first and second grades to learn reading and number combinations; (2) strongly increase emphasis upon science, especially the physical aspects of science, and within the comprehension of individual pupils; (3) modify the usual treatment of geography, decreasing attention paid to capitals of states, populations of cities and increasing emphasis upon global relationships of continents and peoples; (4) increase emphasis upon arithmetic, with special attention to reasoning, quantitative relationships, and problem solving; (5) modify in the upper grades, history and civics courses to include a simple treatment of the elements of geopolitics; (6) increase emphasis in health and hygiene upon safety with special reference to present and possible war hazards such as blackouts, fire, bombing, gas attack and shock; (7) increase emphasis in all grades and subjects

upon functional learning. This involves decreased attention to learning for the sake of passing tests, securing high marks, or being promoted to the next grade and "covering the text."

SHOULD CHILDREN PLAY AT WAR? By Sidonie Matsner Gruenberg. *National Parent-Teacher*, March 1943, 37:4-7.

War play is nothing new. "Play is the language of children. Through play they express their deeper feelings . . . much as we adults relieve ourselves of inner tension by talking things out." This article offers a keen analysis not only of the reasons why children play certain kinds of games but also offers constructive suggestions for the growth of personality.

In addition to urging both patience and understanding upon parents and teachers Mrs. Gruenberg says, "Children must be allowed to develop in accord with their maturing; to experience the feelings that go with various stages as they come along; and to work the troublesome feelings out of their systems . . . Our task, then, is not to stop children from playing at war, for that would be in effect excluding them from the world in which they live. It is rather to help them use their drives and energies in constructive ways. It is for us to help them live in such a way that they will be prepared for the tasks that lie ahead for their generation."

THEY CALL IT CREATIVE WRITING. By Hannah Trimble. *Progressive Education*, February 1943, 20: 66-70.

Creative writing—what is it? "Creative writing is simply truth as children feel it, put down with a stubby pencil on any scrap of paper. When you read it you are looking into an inner chamber. A child is coming toward you without defenses."

While the author questions whether or not there is such a thing as a successful "method" of teaching creative writing, nevertheless this article is so filled with suggestions that even the most discouraged teacher will take heart.

News . . .

HERE AND THERE

New A.C.E. Branches

Tuesday Afternoon Association for Childhood Education, Wichita, Kansas.
Midland Association for Childhood Education, Michigan.
Reinstated: Alabama Association for Childhood Education.

New A.C.E. Publications

As the need increases for day care of young children and extended school services for older children, so the need increases for materials to be used in these services. Hundreds of volunteers training for work in child care centers are feeling this need for the first time, other hundreds of women who are returning to the profession are already alert to it, and those teachers who have steadfastly remained at their posts recognize it as a continuing thing in peace or in war. To meet this need for materials the Association for Childhood Education announces three new mimeographed bulletins.

Games Children Like deals with play, its environment and equipment, and games of many types, such as the traditional, Mother Goose, guessing and riddle games, hiding games, and even finger plays. In some cases, where music is a part of the game, the tunes are included. A bibliography gives sources of much other material. This bulletin consists of twelve pages.

Stories Children Like is a series of stories, all but one original, and that one not published so far as can be learned. These were selected from stories sent in by invited contributors. Ten stories for children from five to eight years old comprise the eighteen-page bulletin.

Songs Children Like offers a rich variety. Some of the songs are original, some are from sources not easily available, and some are traditional. The melodies are given but not the accompaniments. Within the twelve pages are nineteen songs.

The cost of each mimeographed bulletin is twenty cents. Orders may be sent to the Association for Childhood Education, 1201 Sixteenth Street, N.W., Washington, D.C.

A.C.E. Regional Meetings

There is no "pattern" for meetings being sponsored during the summer by one state group in each of the A.C.E. convention regions. They will probably differ widely in their scope but each will have something worthwhile to offer. Try to attend the meeting in your region, or in another if it is more convenient. Write now to the president of the State Association in the region you select, asking for information about the program, housing, possible graduate credit, and other details. The following information will bring you up to date on these conferences.

North Atlantic: Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts. June 28-July 3. Sponsor, Massachusetts A.C.E., Lorraine W. Benner, President, 42 Forest Street, Springfield.

Southeast: University of North Carolina, Greensboro, June 15-17. Sponsor, North Carolina A.C.E., Joyce Cooper, President, Curry School, Women's College, University of North Carolina, Greensboro.

Southwest: University of Oklahoma, Norman. June 7-19. Sponsor, Oklahoma A.C.E., Martha Rinsland, President, 1108 South Thomas Street, Arlington, Virginia.

Great Plains: University of Utah, Salt Lake City. June 24-26. Sponsor, Utah A.C.E., Rose Jones, President, 220 University Street, Salt Lake City.

Pacific Coast: University of California, Los Angeles. Sponsor, California A.C.E., Neva Hollister, President, 4669 Madison Avenue, Fresno.

Great Lakes: University of Chicago. July 9-12. Sponsor, Illinois A.C.E., Julia Mason, President, 401 South Illinois Street, Belleville.

A.C.E. Community Conventions

Branches of the Association for Childhood Education all over the country have welcomed the idea of A.C.E. Community Conventions. Many are planning meetings between May 1 and 15 and this period might well "make history" for the Association and for the growth of opportunities for children in a number of communities. Here are some of their plans.

Chicago, Illinois, A.C.E. As guests we will have leaders from industry, the American Legion, the labor unions, the League of Women Voters, the parent-teacher association, the American Association of Uni-

(Continued on page 426)

Julia Wade Abbot Retires

On the 18th of March many friends gathered with Julia Wade Abbot, past president of the Association for Childhood Education, to celebrate her birthday at a dinner planned by the Philadelphia A.C.E. There was nothing to indicate that the occasion was also a farewell party until after dinner when greetings were given Miss Abbot. A "joyous seriousness" was felt by the group, brought about by the right balance of humor and pathos in the greetings given. Perhaps "joyous seriousness" describes what Miss Abbot has radiated throughout her nineteen years as supervisor of kindergartens, and more recently director of early childhood education in the Philadelphia public schools. Those of us who know her can always count on her humor and friendliness to give us a "lift" personally as well as to hearten us in facing our common school problems.

One of Miss Abbot's greatest contributions to the cause of childhood education in Philadelphia has been her influence in bringing about a change in the "relation of the kindergarten to the succeeding years of the elementary school life of the child and helping incorporate the kindergarten as a part of a continuous educational process." Alexander J. Stoddard, superintendent of Philadelphia public schools, has given Miss Abbot credit for this change. He has expressed her wide interests and her value to the school in these words:

"Miss Abbot's significant contributions to our school system have not been in her own department alone. Through her broad grasp of educational problems she has been of invaluable help to her colleagues on the superintendent's staff. Fundamentally Miss Abbot's value to our school system is the direct outcome of her personal integrity and of her professional insight. We have also benefited richly from the fact that . . . she has rendered conspicuous service in other parts of the country and has been associated with professional groups of national importance."

Health has been a subject of great interest to Miss Abbot. She directed preschool work in the American Child Health Association and helped conduct a health survey of schools in the Canal Zone and Panama. While employed as kindergarten specialist in the U. S. Office of Education at Washington, D. C., she did much field work, speaking throughout the country.

The importance of community interests has always been recognized by Miss Abbot. She has lectured and conducted study groups for the parent-teacher organization and has also lectured for the Womans Inter-denominational Union of Philadelphia. As a member of the central committee on the day care of children and of the education committee of the American Association of University Women, and as chairman of the advisory group for WPA nursery schools she has been of special help.

Miss Abbot has served faithfully on many A.C.E. committees from the time she became a member of our Association, when it was known as the International Kindergarten Union. In 1921 she was official delegate of the Federal Bureau of Education and of the I.K.U. to the First Pan American Educational Conference held in Honolulu, Hawaii. In 1925 she attended the World Conference of Education in Edinburgh, Scotland, as I.K.U. delegate. Miss Abbot also served as secretary of the preschool section of the World Federation of Education Associations at the meeting in Toronto, Canada. She became president of the Association for Childhood Education in 1932 and served for two years.

As important as all the posts Miss Abbot has filled in her work for the cause of childhood education is the fact that she is a friend of little children. Her most treasured moments have been those spent in the classrooms.

At the close of the school year Miss Abbot will go to Montclair, New Jersey, where she will make her home at 25 Trinity Place.

MARJORIE HARDY.



Julia Wade Abbot

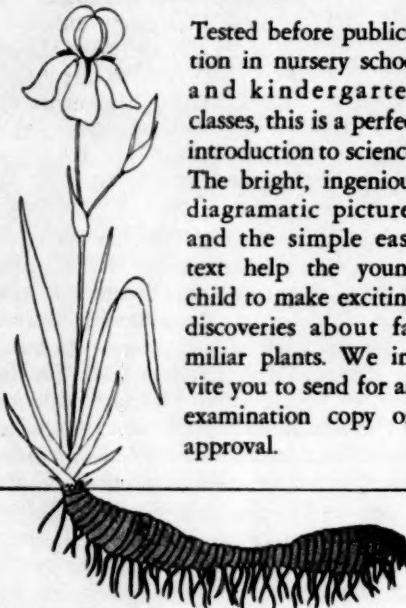
(Continued from page 424)

A Unique "First" Book About Plants



UP ABOVE & DOWN BELOW

By Dr. Irma G. Webber



Tested before publication in nursery school and kindergarten classes, this is a perfect introduction to science. The bright, ingenious diagrammatic pictures and the simple easy text help the young child to make exciting discoveries about familiar plants. We invite you to send for an examination copy on approval.

William R. Scott, Inc.
Rm. 406, 72 Fifth Ave.
New York, N. Y.

- Please send me a copy of UP ABOVE & DOWN BELOW on 30-day approval.
- Please send me the free illustrated catalog of Young Scott Books.

Name _____

Address _____

versity Women, and as many other organizations as we can contact. Representatives of the Elizabeth McCormick Foundation and of the extended school services program of the U. S. Office of Education will be asked to explain the possibilities of a program for child care. We hope to ask the organization representatives to tell us of their programs for children and to solicit their aid in discussing and understanding and solving the problems of children in this time of crisis.

Indianapolis, Indiana, A.C.E. Plans include study groups followed by a general summary, a luncheon and a talk by a well-known speaker. County teachers and members of local educational and defense boards will be invited guests.

Davenport, Iowa, A.C.E. Our meeting will be a quad-city, two-county group and we expect an attendance of about four hundred persons.

Cincinnati, Ohio, Council for Childhood Education. We are having an expensive box supper. The meetings will be held in the kindergarten room at the University of Cincinnati and the supper in the woods adjoining the campus. The program will consist of a round table discussion about local plans for extended school services for children of working mothers and we hope to have a person who has been working on the U. S. Office of Education extended school services program tell us about that work. Special invitations are being sent to the four other local Branches here, and to persons at Miami University.

Allegany County, Maryland, Primary Teachers Association. Our schools will be closed on the afternoon of May 12, during which we plan to have a general meeting followed by several round table discussions. Then we will have a dinner, with a speaker on "Legislation and Finance."

Mailings to Branches

Recently, through the courtesy of the U. S. Office of Education and the Children's Bureau, the following pamphlets and mimeographed materials have been mailed to presidents of all A.C.E. Branches:

Office of Education: School Children and the War Series, Leaflet No. 1, *School Services for Children of Working Mothers*; Leaflet No. 2, *All-Day School Programs for Children of Working Mothers*; Leaflet No. 3, *Nursery Schools Vital to America's War Effort*.

Children's Bureau: Bulletin, *Community Action for Children in Wartime*; letter from Katharine Lenroot, chief of the Bureau, to fathers and mothers; reprint and revision of a March 1942 bulletin, *Facts About Child Health*.

These materials will be found useful as Branches plan for A.C.E. Community Conventions and for the care of children in their communities.

Honored Visitor

Miss Lillian de Lissa, principal of the Gypsy Hill Training School, London, and former presi-

Have You the Knack of Handling Very Young Children?

EDUCATION of the YOUNG CHILD

CONTENTS

The origin, function, and organization of nursery schools in the United States; the staffing, housing, and equipping of nursery schools; the physical care and guidance of young children; the methods and objectives in developing the child socially and emotionally; developing his motor skills, his understanding of the physical world, his conception of the social and economic structure of his community, his enjoyment of arts; the relationship between home and school. Assignments follow each chapter.

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THIS BOOK is designed to formulate a sound technique and educational philosophy that will prove effective in dealing with very young children of the pre-school age. The educational objectives of helping the very young live happily with other people, understand the world they live in, and express themselves creatively, and the method by which these goals are reached, are thoroughly and completely discussed.

Grace Langdon, Chief, Child Protection Program, W.P.A., says, "In my opinion, Dr. Landreth's book is one which will be of interest and help to large numbers of people. Students will find the questions at the head of each chapter both interesting and stimulating. The assignments at the end of the chapters will be suggestive to teachers."

"Nursery school teachers will find practical help in the suggestions for the organization and operation of nursery schools, as well as in the very skilfully written case studies illustrating situations where guidance is needed. The suggestions for guidance are unusually practical and helpful."

"The various lists of books and sources for equipment will be of use to both students and teachers."

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NEW YORK

dent of the Nursery School Association of Great Britain, is now in this country. With the guidance of the British Information Services, 30 Rockefeller Plaza, New York City, she will visit many centers in this country and will speak to many groups. It is a privilege for those concerned with the welfare of young children both in England and in this country, to hear and talk with Miss De Lissa.

Bureau Reorganized

The U. S. Department of Agriculture announces a new Bureau of Human Nutrition and Home Economics, functioning under the Agricultural Research Administration which is headed by Eugene C. Auchter. This is a consolidation of the Bureau of Home Economics and the Division of Protein and Nutrition Research of the Bureau of Agricultural Chemistry and Engineering.

Henry C. Sherman will head the new bureau. Louise Stanley, who has served as chief of the Bureau of Home Economics since its beginning in 1923, has been drafted by Dr. Auchter to serve as special assistant in charge of food problems related to foreign countries.

Federal Aid to Education

On April 7, during the hearings on Bill S. 637 on federal aid to education, the Association for Childhood Education filed with the chairman of the Subcommittee on Education of the Senate Committee on Education and Labor, the following letter of endorsement:

The Association for Childhood Education, an organization of 41,000 members, endorses S. 637 because:

We believe that the democratic way of living offers the best opportunity for human development that the world knows at present.

We believe that an educated citizenry is imperative if democracy is to survive in this country and if America is to take its place as a free country in the post-war world.

We believe that federal aid to education is necessary if all the children of all the citizens are to have equal educational opportunities. Failure to provide equality of opportunity for all the children is incompatible with a democratic way of life.

To win the war and to protect civilian populations the federal government is spending millions of dollars, much of it for emergency educational programs. But the fact that the United States is at war does not alter the fundamental need to maintain the stable, ongoing educational institutions which are the backbone of our country. The present and future existence



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of our public schools is jeopardized unless the federal government supplies, through the Office of Education, its permanently established agency, grants in aid to states necessary to keep the schools open, to provide qualified teachers, and to maintain standards developed through years of work. Fathers in the armed forces and mothers carrying double parental responsibility need the assurance that America cares enough to provide schools for their children and qualified teachers to teach them.

The post-war responsibilities of American citizens will be even greater than those which face us today. We urge immediate passage of S. 367 in order that the present needs of children may be met and that they may be prepared to assume their responsibilities as the adult citizens of tomorrow.

Planning Board and Education

From the report of the National Resources Planning Board to President Roosevelt come these recommendations concerning education:

Nursery schools and kindergartens be made generally available in urban areas and where possible in rural areas when necessary.

Equal access to general and specialized education be made available to all youths of college and university age according to ability and the needs of society.

Education of adults through expansion of correspondence and class study, forums, educational broadcasting, and libraries and museums.

Expansion of educational provisions for especially gifted children, as well as those physically or mentally handicapped, or socially maladjusted.

A quality of education of the highest type adequate to the needs of a democratic nation.

Opportunities for special training for all types of men demobilized from the armed forces and war industries or a chance to continue their education if it was interrupted.

Camp facilities for all youth above the lower elementary grades, with work experience provided as part of camp life.

Meals at schools and supervised work and play projects for all children who need them.

An extensive period of building repair and construction to meet obvious needs. And that school districts be reorganized to enlarge the local administrative unit and tax base. This should include transportation and dormitories in rural areas where needed.

U. S. Office of Education and U. S. Department of State be expanded and developed to provide adequate research facilities and educational leadership.

That adequate funds be provided by local, state, and federal governments to assure the carrying out of all these recommendations.

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NOW READY—AN OUTSTANDING NEW PROFESSIONAL BOOK

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By Helen B. Pryor

In these days of stress and strain and swing shifts, the responsibility resting on all those who have the care of children is unusually heavy. As a textbook for courses in child growth and development, or as a handbook for teachers and parents alike, this new book will be invaluable.

In order to handle children wisely and successfully, teachers and parents need to know not only *what* to do, but *why* they should do it. AS THE CHILD GROWS answers, simply and clearly, the questions of psychological and physical development at various age levels that every parent and every teacher must face. The text shows clearly *what is normal* for the child of a given age and therefore what may be excepted.

The width-weight tables included in the appendix are an outstanding contribution to child care. They have never before been published in a textbook, and are but one example of the many scientific and practical helps given in this text.

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LAUGHING TOGETHER

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days. We have tried to see their child-world through our adult eyes. Sometimes it has seemed silly to us, sometimes too exciting. Then we have had to step in and perhaps introduce a pattern which will bring some order and reality to a situation which might run out-of-hand. Yet we recognize that many of these are modes of social approach and therefore, on the whole, acceptable.

When a child remains too long on one level, for instance clowning or phantasy, we would be inclined to take this as a signal of some maladjustment and bend our efforts to help him find more desirable ways of asserting himself. At the same time, we would work with parents and child to try to find the underlying causes of his fears, anxieties, or show-off behavior.

We do not have to wait to be told by research workers, by physiologists and psychologists that laughter is closely associated with a relief of tension, "a sudden relaxation of strain," or that it is beneficial physiologically to the body.³ We ourselves have experienced this and we know it to be true. In a good laugh we feel fret and care slip from us and well-being take their place. Did you as a child play a trick on the "It" in tag games? Loosening your jacket so that it was about to fall from you, you brushed purposely close to the "It." As he grabbed to catch you, you slipped out of your coat and left him standing there, his hand closed over the limp cloth.

So, in laughter, we have fooled the "It"—that which bothers us—and left him standing there with the empty jacket in his hand while we have run free.

³ "The Expressions of Emotion." By C. Landis. *Handbook of General Experimental Psychology*. C. Murchison, Editor. Worcester, Mass.: Clark University Press, 1934. P. 334. "System of Motor Psychology." By M. Washburn. *Psychologies of 1930*. C. Murchison, Editor. Worcester, Mass.: Clark University Press, 1930. P. 84. *Emotion and the Educative Process*. By Daniel Prescott. Washington, D. C.: American Council on Education, 1938.

LET US LIVE WITH OUR CHILDREN

(Continued from page 389)

of his favorite bird is so clearly tied in with his own carelessness. In short, throughout the book the child sees himself and his own experiences pictured and is helped to re-live them in conversation and dramatic play until, on a simple plane, the inescapable continuity of life begins to unfold itself.

This centennial year of the Mother Play may well summon us to a better fulfilment of these "imperfectly realized" ideals, to a wiser selection of essential experiences, to a growing mastery of life through gradual recognition of its relatedness, to a deeper stress on the "eternal verities" without which life is meaningless. Let us forget the acknowledged imperfections and crudities of this wise old book and forgive its too frequent misuse. Let us look, instead, for that which made it in the words of Susan Blow, its greatest translator and interpreter, the "beating heart" of so much of our early work. Let us hear once again its call to "Come, live with our children," for in such living—discriminating, sympathetic, challenging—lies Life itself for us and for them.

ERRATUM

We are grateful to three readers of *CHILDHOOD EDUCATION* who have called our attention to an error in the credit line of "What Is Freedom?" quoted on page 163 in the December 1942 issue. It is incorrectly credited to Dr. Peter Marshall who tells us that it should be credited to Hazel Parker, a reporter for *The Louisville Courier-Journal*, in which it was first published as an editorial, "Freedom Is Made of Simple Stuff." A senator who had heard Dr. Marshall quote Miss Parker in one of his sermons included the quotation in one of his speeches before the U. S. Senate. The senator's speech was printed in the *Congressional Record* from which we obtained the quotation. We are glad at this late date to credit Miss Parker with this excellent statement.

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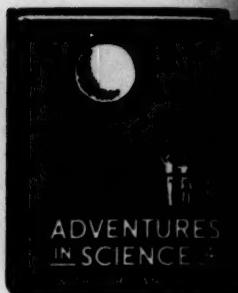
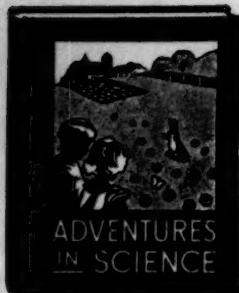
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